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Rotary celebrates 50th year. PAGE 5

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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75¢

Backpack sends 4 to hospital

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A backpack that was thrown away by a habitual offender during a police chase on Plumeria Avenue in Garapan yesterday morning had four officers feeling nauseous and dizzy after they opened it and inhaled the chemicals inside the bag. The chemicals later turned out to be used in making crystal methamphetamine or "ice."

Medics of the Department of Emergency Medical Services brought the four officers to the Commonwealth Health Center. They were treated and released.

A brief foot chase resulted in police arresting a suspect, 39-year-old David Sablan, who will be charged in federal court for attempting to manu-

See BACKPACK on Page 4

Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services Hazmat Unit members in protective gear inspect the suspicious bag left on Plumeria Avenue in Garapan yesterday morning that caused four police officers to suffer dizziness and vomit after inhaling the contents.

DEREK GERSONDE

IPI: Bloomberg raid story is false

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC claims a magazine story about a supposed federal raid at one of its offices is false and the company plans to counter with legal action at once.

In response to *Bloomberg Businessweek*'s March 14, 2018, story about U.S. federal agents and the Federal Bureau of Intelligence raid-

See IPI on Page 4

Chinese workers tricked into illegal work on Saipan

By SOPHIA YAN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

HONOLULU (AP)—Zhou Qingjiang was toiling in a factory in China's rust belt when he decided to pack his bags for America. A recruiter guaranteed a job that paid $3,000 a month—more than triple the average wage in China—as long as Zhou forked over thousands of dollars for his help. The offer was too good to pass up.

Ten days later, Zhou found himself on the tiny Pacific island of Saipan, a U.S. Commonwealth, working 14-hour days with few breaks on a casino construction site. He bunked with eight men in dilapidated housing and took home less than half the promised wages. This was not the American dream he pictured.

See CHINESE on Page 4

In this July 26, 2017, photo, Chinese laborers Jingbao Zhao, left, Xiaoli Wang, center, and Yongbo Sun, protest in front of the Imperial Pacific Casino in Saipan, the Northern Mariana Islands, a U.S. commonwealth in the Western Pacific.

AP

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McDonald's Saipan is celebrating its 25th anniversary of being in the CNMI.

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Toys R Us is headed toward shuttering its U.S. operations.

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NATION
Thousands of students walk out of their classrooms to demand action on gun violence.

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Local

AK Saipan fetes Dream Car Contest winners

Atkins Kroll Saipan feted the winners of its 12th Annual Toyota Dream Car Art Contest last Saturday at its showroom in Oleai.

The Top 3 winners of the three divisions—12-15, 8-11, and under 8—were awarded gift certificates and entry to the international Toyota Dream Car Art Contest in Japan this August.

The winners in the 12-15 age group were Yu Jeong and Dmitri Weilbacher, first place; Elaine Joy Fernandez, second; and Anna Pan, third place.

Yu's entry, named "Dandelion Seed Car," is a car in a shape of a dandelion seed so that in case of earthquakes or floods, the car can rescue people and turn polluted air into clean air. She said her dream car also makes natural energy at night.

In the 8-11 division, Jeewoo Son took the plum with her "Toyota Capsule Car." She said she made her dream car in the shape of the Toyota logo and it has many features—a camera, an oxygen tank, a clean water system, an "anger sensor," and a charger powered by solar energy.

The rest of the age group's winners were second placer Diego Luis Cartalava Metran and third placer Arianee Jade San Nicolas.

Only the second and third place winners were awarded in the under-8 category, with Joyce Zhou Hou and Tina Chi taking second and third places, respectively.

Atkins Kroll Guam Marketing Department's Athena Cruz Ramos said the 12th Annual Toyota Dream Car Art Contest is the largest children's art contest in the world.

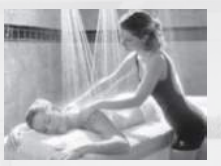
"It allows the children to be able to share their ideas about the cars of the future and their creativity on what their dream car is going to be, whether it's from shooting out ice cream, to feeding the homeless, to cleaning the ocean, sky is the limit on what they want," she said.

Ramos said the competition drew 160 entries on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. Together with the winners of the 500 entries in Guam, the eight age group divisions in the CNMI get to compete at the bigger worldwide art competition in Japan.

"Original arts pieces will be sent to Japan where judges will be able to select a winner who will be sent to Japan to receive their prize," she said.

Winners from CNMI were given gift certificates from Seatouch LLC, Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, and Let's Go Tour Company. ***(Mark Rabago)***

HANA
HEALTH MASSAGE



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Farrell featured in humanities radio program

This Sunday's "Your Humanities Half-Hour" on radio station on Power 99 will feature a July 2017 interview with historian Don Farrell.

Farrell will discuss his latest publication, an updated version *Saipan: A Brief History* that has been translated into Japanese, Korean, and Chinese.

He will also share his thoughts on the need to preserve historical documents and other records relating to the Northern Mariana Islands.

"Your Humanities Half-Hour" radio program is sponsored by the Northern Marianas Humanities Council. It airs each Sunday from 2pm to 2:30pm on Power 99, with host Catherine R. Perry. ***(PR)***

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5 sites on Saipan red-flagged

The Bureau Environmental and Coastal Quality has given five sites on Saipan red flags and advised the public not to fish or swim within 300 feet of these locations for the next 48 hours or until notified.

Samples taken from Bird Island Beach, Jeffery's Beach, Chalan Piao Beach, DPW Channel Beach, and Hyatt Regency Saipan Beach were found to contain excessive concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria (entrococci) that exceeded the CNMI Marine Water Quality Standards. These bacteria can indicate the presence of human and animal waste in the water.

BECQ analyzes water samples collected from Saipan's 38 recreational beaches and storm drainages every Tuesday.

BECQ welcomes all inquiries as to the quality of the beach water. Contact DEQ at 664-8500 for more information. ***(PR)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Water interruption on Tinian tomorrow

There will be a scheduled water service interruption on the entire island of Tinian on Saturday, March 17, from 8am to 5pm, to complete the installations of two 8-inch gate valves in the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s main distribution water line and to make the necessary system upgrade at the Maui II Pump Station.

As a result of the installations and system upgrade, CUC will be able to supply extra volume of water to the island of Tinian.

For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates. ***(CUC)***

JKPL hours of operation

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library will be closed on Saturday, March 24, for Commonwealth Covenant Day and on Friday, March 30, for Good Friday. For more information, visit the www.cnmilib.org and like and/or follow JKPL's Facebook page. ***(PR)***

ASL lessons at public library

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library will be hosting a Basic American Sign Language class today, March 16, from 4pm to 5pm in the JKPL Children's Room. This class, will teach basic American Sign Language through interactive and engaging activities. In addition, because the class is practical, participants are guaranteed to use their new knowledge in everyday life. ***(PR)***

Power interruption on March 17 and 18

There will be a scheduled power interruption tomorrow, March 17, and on Sunday March 18, from 6am to 11am, on Saipan to allow Commonwealth Utilities Corp. line crew to replace eight 45-foot wooden poles with eight concrete poles along Chalan Pale Arnold Road on Lower Navy Hill. No water wells or wastewater lifts station will be affected. Travelers commuting northbound and southbound on Chalan Pale Arnold Road in the area of Lower Navy Hill are asked to exercise caution when traveling through the working areas. For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates (https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/). ***(CUC)***

Free business seminar for veterans & spouses

The CNMI Military/Veteran's Affairs Office and the Small Business Development Center will be offering a free business seminar called "Reboot to Business" at Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan's Azucena Room on March 26, from 9am to 4pm, presented by Dennis Kwak, director, Veterans Business Outreach Center of the Pacific. To register, contact Velma Del Rosario at 664-2650 or visit https://sbavets.force.com/s/. ***(PR)***

Military training in Guam and CNMI

ASAN, Guam—The U.S. military will conduct training at the island of Farallon de Medinilla today, March 16, from 9am to 6pm. It is recommended the public, fishermen and marine tour operators monitor the Coast Guard broadcast notice to mariners for advisories. The location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla will be in a 12-nautical mile radius of the island. ***(PR)***

CHINESE

From Page 1

"All those agents tricked us," said Zhou, 46. "When I arrived and saw hundreds of other Chinese workers, I realized we were all here illegally."

U.S. officials have been investigating and announced settlements last week with four Chinese construction firms to pay $14 million in back wages and damages to 2,400 affected workers. The companies, contracted by Hong Kong's Imperial Pacific International, brought workers on tourist visas, paid them less than required by law and failed to secure proper work authorization by exploiting a visa waiver program that allows Chinese citizens to travel to the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Associated Press interviewed six workers, all of whom recounted experiences similar to Zhou's. One recalled working 19-hour shifts, another said his passport was confiscated, and all said recruiters assured them they would enter the U.S. legally.

Job placement fees were as high as $17,000, and one worker remembers ponying up an additional $1,000 to enter the construction site.

What's playing out on Saipan, nearly 4,000 miles (6,440 kilometers) west of Hawaii, highlights challenges for both the United States and China.

For the U.S., the case comes as President Donald Trump cracks down on visa fraud and illegal immigration. Global projects, like the Saipan casino hotel, form the cornerstone of President Xi Jinping's plan to boost China's clout by splashing $1 trillion in construction and infrastructure around the world. But the initiative, dubbed "One Belt, One Road," is suffering setbacks—projects are delayed, governments are pulling out, and now, U.S. officials have linked illegal migrant labor.

After a Chinese worker in Saipan died on the job last year, the FBI raided the site and discovered illegal workers, along with hundreds of their passports locked in cabinets, and spreadsheets that listed employees as "heigong," the Chinese word for illegal laborer, according to court documents.

Construction halted, leaving workers stranded. Employees protested and demanded reparations—many suffered injuries while working. Eventually, many returned to China or took jobs in other countries, even if they hadn't recouped all funds due. A few have stayed in Saipan. Hundreds of workers remain confused about what they're owed, how they'll be paid and when they'll get the money.

"I've been waiting a year to be paid," said Xu Longcai, 51, a farmer from northeast China. "I borrowed so much money to come here. But I don't have a single cent—how can I go home? I can't pay what I owe."

The U.S. Labor Department and Saipan authorities didn't respond to requests for comment about how it would ensure money would be paid to workers. Imperial Pacific said in a statement last week it is pleased a settlement was reached. Shares of the Hong Kong-listed company are down 7.4 percent so far this year.

Construction is the second most common industry for forced labor, according to the International Labour Organization in Geneva. The group estimates nearly 25 million people were victims of forced labor in 2016, with roughly 60 percent working in private sectors.

"This is a pretty classic trafficking and forced labor scenario," said Agnieszka Fryszman, partner and chair of the human rights practice at law firm Cohen Milstein in Washington, D.C. "You have people with these debts. . They're in the middle of the ocean. The isolation of the location is ripe for exploitation."

But even with help from the authorities, "can you ever enforce the judgment, and how would you do that?" Fryszman said. "You'd have to get their assets here."

BACKPACK

From Page 1

facture a controlled substance, according to Department of Public Safety spokesperson Jacqueline Rae Shepard.

She said that DPS received a call at 4:04am about a suspicious man walking back and forth in front of the Micro Beach Hotel in Garapan. Police officers located the suspect, identified as Sablan, at 4:20am, but when they tried to approach him, he ran down an alley and tossed a backpack.

After a short chase, police arrested Sablan and found the backpack.

Shepard said that smoke poured out of the backpack when the officers opened it.

Police officers cordoned the area off until the arrival of DFEMS Hazmat Unit. Hazmat Unit members, in protective gear, procured the bag and rendered it safe.

"DFEMS took every precaution to make sure the items inside the bag did not explode, and ran tests to determine if the chemicals were being used to create meth," Shepard said.

DFEMS spokesperson Derek Gersonde said the backpack and its contents were handed over to the Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force for further investigation.

Shepard said DEA and DFEMS confirmed that the chemicals were those used to make "ice" and collected the bag and its contents as evidence.

Separately, Gersonde said it was reported to DPS at 5:07am that a suspicious bag had been left behind on Plumeria Avenue between the Poseidon Bar and Café at the Park.

Two minutes later, firefighters and medics from the Garapan Fire Station responded to the scene, Gersonde said, and found four police officers complaining of nausea and dizziness after opening the bag.

Two of the officers started vomiting within minutes after they inhaled the contents.

"If anyone finds a suspicious bag, please do not open or touch the package and call 911," Gersonde said.

IPI

From Page 1

ing a "Saipan office of Imperial Pacific International Holdings Ltd. last week," the IPI board, led by executive director Cai Lingli, said in a statement that after making all "reasonable inquiries," they have no knowledge of such a raid happening.

"…The [board] hereby clarifies and confirms that there was no raid by U.S. agents on any of its offices, its casino, or buildings as erroneously reported by Bloomberg. Bloomberg has once again misrepresented facts about the [g]roup and the [b]oard shall take legal actions immediately," said a March 15, 2018 announcement by the IPI board.

The statement was also sent to the Hong Kong Stock Exchange.

The statement reiterated that the Hong Kong-based company would be taking legal actions against Bloomberg. The company in late March 2018 issued a statement announcing they would be suing the magazine after they published a Feb. 15, 2018 story titled, "A Chinese Casino Has Conquered a Piece of America," which alleged impropriety within the business operations as well as engaging in improper relationships with Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and several of his family members, among many other allegations.

Bloomberg had reported that besides seizing documents from the IPI office, the FBI also issued them a statement, along the lines of prioritizing public corruption, which the alleged FBI statement emphasized was at the top of their criminal investigative priority.

"Elected or appointed officials are entrusted and expected to protect the interests of the people with integrity. When that trust is betrayed, the security and stability of our government is put at risk," reported Bloomberg on the reported FBI statement.

In an interview with Commonwealth Casino Commission executive director Edward Deleon Guerrero, he said that IPI management on Saipan, including their legal counsel, denied reports of a raid done by federal agents.

"That article, according to IPI's legal team, is false," he said.

He added that Bloomberg's claim that the CNMI government procures legal advice from the Torres Brothers law firm, which is managed and owned by the governor's brothers, is also false.

"The [law firm] never provided legal [services] to the CNMI government. …I don't know why they would say things like that, but…[Bloomberg] should make sure that whatever they are printing is accurate," he said.

Deleon Guerrero said that, based on conversations with the IPI legal counsel, IPI was not aware of any raids or confiscation of documents.

"When you do secure a search warrant, that becomes a public issue," he added.

FBI mum on Bloomberg article

The FBI declined to confirm the Bloomberg story that its agents raided a Saipan office of Imperial Pacific last week.

"We cannot comment, or confirm the existence of investigations, or any specifics thereof," said FBI Honolulu Field Office spokesperson Michele Ernst in an email in response to *Saipan Tribune*'s inquiry.

Ernst reiterated the FBI's previous official comment that, as a matter of legal policy, the FBI does not comment on criminal investigations, to include confirming or denying cases, their status as ongoing or not.

However, Ernst said, public corruption is the FBI's top criminal investigative priority and encouraged anyone with information about a potential violation of federal law to contact the FBI.

Last year, federal agents raided an office of Imperial Pacific's subcontractor and subsequently arrested four persons on charges of harboring illegal aliens in connection with the construction of Imperial Pacific's casino and resort in Garapan, the Imperial Pacific Resort. ***(With Ferdie de la Torre)***

Rotary celebrates 50th year

The Rotary Club of Saipan is celebrating its 50th anniversary tonight with '60s-themed party at Surf Club in Susupe.

"This event is for Rotarians to get together and revisit past projects, look into new ones, and figure out where we are headed. Our club was chartered on March 16, 1968. We hope to have a great night to reflect on what we Rotarians have been doing, are doing, and how we will proceed into the future," said Rotary president Thomas Thornburgh.

He is proud of what the organization has contributed to the CNMI community since 1968. There are currently 45 members of the local Rotary Club.

"We've been here since 1968 and plan on being here 50 more years. The local Rotary Club has evolved in the past 50 years as a strong entity providing for the betterment of our people in sports, in literacy, and during typhoons like Soudelor," said Thornburgh.

The Rotary Club is currently working on both its Garapan Skate Park and Kagman Family Park projects. It is also known for its popular fundraiser, Las Vegas Night.

"We are currently distributing dictionaries to all our third graders in the public and private schools. We also plan to bring back the Rock to Read on April 21, 2018," Thornburgh added.

The local Rotary Club also has the Interact Club for high school students and Rotaract for college students. It also organizes youth exchange programs, where students get to fly to Japan to learn about its culture and vise versa for Japanese students visiting Saipan.

For more information visit www.rotary.org. ***(Mark Rabago)***

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Woman pleads guilty to lying in passport application

A woman indicted in federal court for allegedly lying in an application for a U.S. passport on behalf of her daughter pleaded guilty on Wednesday afternoon.

Bernieann Taitingfong Rahman pleaded guilty to false statement as part of a plea deal.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Magistrate Judge Heather L. Kennedy said her recommendation to accept the guilty plea will be referred to Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona. The setting of the sentencing shall be included in Manglona's order.

Rahman submitted a form DS-11 application for U.S. passport to the CNMI passport office on July 6, 2017, on behalf of her daughter. She omitted the name of her daughter's father in the form.

On Aug. 16, 2017, Rahman told Diplomatic Security Service resident agent in charge Marc Weinstock and special agent Joseph Kramer that she omitted the father's name because, at the time, the only birth certificate she had of her daughter also omitted the father's name.

This was a lie because Rahman had a birth certificate for her daughter that included the name of the father.

On Nov. 6, 2017, when confronted with the second birth certificate, Rahman said she omitted the father's name because she could not find the second birth certificate and she was in a hurry.

She also stated in a written statement dated Aug. 16, 2017, that she did not obtain the father's signature because she would have to spend more. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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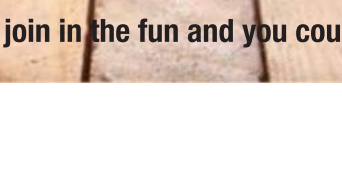

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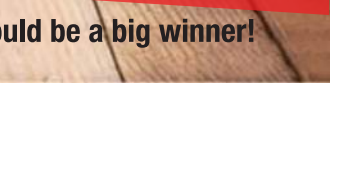

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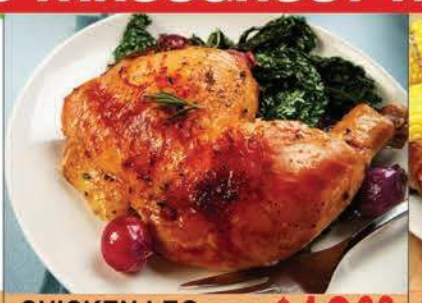

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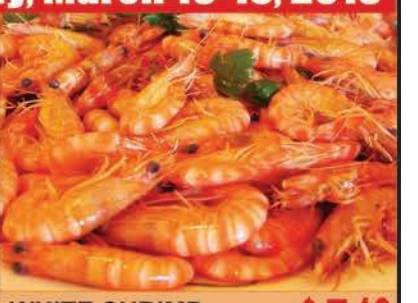

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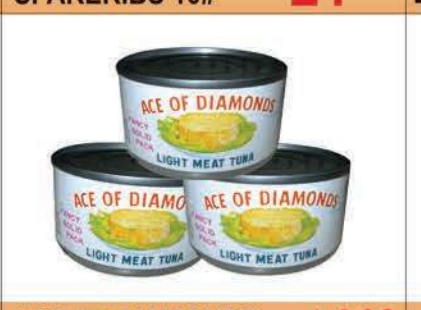

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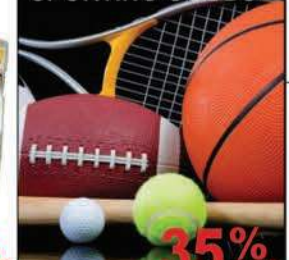

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Okeanos Marianas sails for Sarigan, Anatahan

The crew of the *Okeanos Marianas* set sail on a four-day voyage to Sarigan and Anatahan last Friday, stopping in Managaha Island to teach Seventh-Day Adventist Kindergarteners about the canoe and entertain them with a few blows of its conch shell.

The *Okeanos Marianas* is a *vaka motu* or "boat for the island" built with the intention of providing regular transportation throughout the Marianas and led by captain Cecilio Raiukiulipiy, a seasoned voyager and the nephew of grand master navigator Mau Piailug. The crew is composed of sailors from Saipan, Guam, Satawal, Chuuk, Ifalik, Pagan, Canada, and the U.S. mainland.

The crew of the *Okeanos Marianas* stop by Managaha to teach Seventh-Day Adventist Kindergarteners about the canoe and entertain them with a few blows of its conch shell.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The *Okeanos Marianas* is currently operated by Okeanos Marianas Sustainable Sea Transport Ltd., a Saipan-based company dedicated to fostering environmentally friendly sea travel in the Marianas through applying the traditional navigation and sailing knowledge that the people of the Pacific have developed over centuries. The voyage to the Northern Marianas served as an opportunity for the crew to build their sailing skills, from navigating in the midst of a sudden squall to dropping anchor in Anatahan's ecologically stunning Turtle Cove.

"Ocean and weather conditions in the Northern Islands can change rapidly so the *Okeanos* crew has been traveling there to familiarize themselves with the water and the weather patterns and expand their understanding of inter-island navigation," said OSST board member Peter Perez. "We want to expand their experience in the region before we start taking regular trips with the general public."

They also collected nearly 600 lbs of trash from both islands, which they brought back to Saipan in a heap of garbage bags along with over 50 abandoned buoys. "We are all happy that we did something to help the environment of Anatahan," said crew member and captain-in-training Andrea Carr. "It has been a fulfilling voyage."

The OSST predicts that the *Okeanos Marianas* will serve many purposes, including transportation of people and cargo, environmental conservation, cultural preservation, and eco-tourism. Another potential use may be the resettlement of unpopulated Northern Islands including Anatahan, which has been abandoned since the CNMI government evacuated the island due to volcanic activity in 1990. "Those lands have been unoccupied for far too long," said Perez.

"It's a waste of island," agreed Raiukiulipiy.

For the time being, the *Okeanos* crew will continue to train. They sail to Tinian today, Friday, and are working toward their first sail to Pagan in April.

"It's not about money, it's about getting people home," said OSST managing director Emma Perez. "Getting the crew familiar with the waters and conditions in the north will help us establish regular transportation in the near future." ***(PR)***

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MVA: Stay on CQ tax hike until flights stabilize

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

While he appreciates the Department of Finance staving off a planned 700-percent hike in the customs and quarantine tax, Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Chris Concepcion hopes that, if it does decide to re-impose the tax increase, it would do so in increments.

He said MVA wants a permanent stay on the planned increase of the CQ tax until the CNMI stabilizes the airline situation.

"Overall, we don't oppose a gradual increase in the CQ tax. But from $1 to $7 with a two-month notice [is not good]," said Concepcion last week. "I understand that the rationale is that it has never been increased in the past 20 years, but that doesn't justify the 700-percent increase.

"We know [that Customs] has its own needs, but we cannot bite the hand that feeds [us]. Without the airlines, there is no revenue. What are you going to do if they pull out? Then we have zero. You got to balance it. Yes, we have to make sure that we cover our costs but you also have to do it in a responsible way," he said.

Before Finance decided to delay the 700-percent rise in CQ tax, Concepcion said that several airlines reached out to him expressing strong opposition to it and some even threatened to pull out of the CNMI.

"[One] airline said they will either reduce or pull out from the CNMI. We don't need that right now. Overall, we don't oppose a gradual increase in the CQ tax. But from $1 to $7 with a two-month notice [is not good]," he said.

The average CQ tax paid by carriers flying to the CNMI is between $7,000 and $10,000 a month, depending on how big the aircraft, how many passengers, and how frequent the schedule is.

"At this point, it's very hard to invite an airline over," said Concepcion.

He said a 100-percent increase in the CQ tax is more palatable than the originally proposed 700-percent hike.

"I think just a 100-percent increase from $1 to $2 is reasonable. I think a gradual increase of $1 spreading out that $7 increase into seven years or 10 years is better," he said.

The $7 CQ tax was originally scheduled for implementation starting March 1, 2018.

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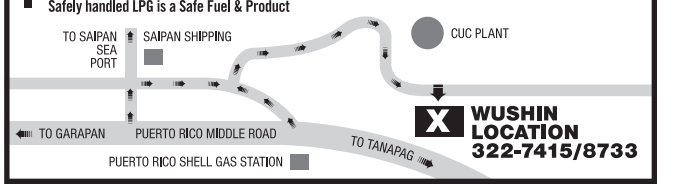

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IT&E announces arrival of Samsung Galaxy S9 and S9+

HARMON, Guam—IT&E announced yesterday that the Samsung Galaxy S9 and S9+ are available for purchase in Guam and CNMI stores starting on March 16.

New features of the Galaxy S9 and S9+ include:

■ Dual aperture lens adjustable to F1.5 and F2.4 for quality photos in any lighting condition, even low light

■ Super slow motion video at 960 frames per second for epic videos

■ Stereo sound speakers for a theater-like audio experience

■ AR Emoji for fun, personalized messages

■ Updated Bixby for more features, including Live Translation

The devices are available on IT&E's new Device Payment Plan, which allows customers to pay for their new Samsung Galaxy S9 or S9+ in affordable monthly installments.

In addition, customers that purchase the device online at store.ite.net get a 15-percent discount until April 16.

IT&E offers both the Samsung Galaxy S9 and S9+, with 64GB of internal memory, in midnight black, lilac purple, and coral blue.

For more information, call (670) 682-4482 (CNMI) / (671) 922-4483 (Guam). ***(PR)***

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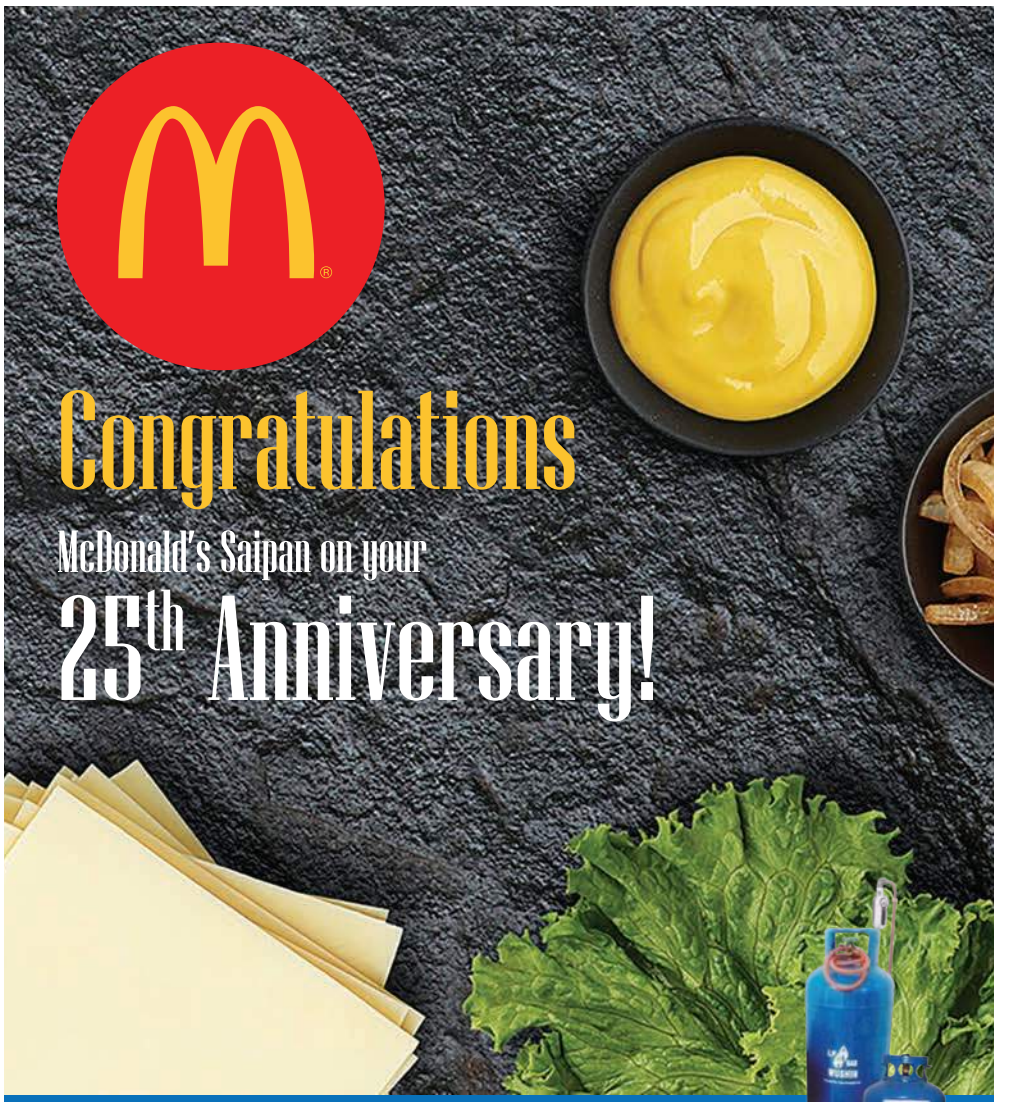

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McDonald's Saipan celebrates 25th birthday

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

McDonald's Saipan management team.

Wherever we are, wherever we go around the world, when we see a McDonald's restaurant, it feels like all's well with the world. That must be how people felt when McDonald's landed in the CNMI 25 years ago on March 18, 1993.

McDonald's Middle Road management team.

According to Joe Ayuyu Jr., general manager of McDonald's Middle Road, his father, Jose C. Ayuyu, really did make many people's dreams come true when he decided to bring the fastfood chain to Saipan 25 years ago.

"He said that, over the years, Guam was the only place in Micronesia that had a McDonald's. My father would see that every time our people travel to Guam, they would bring back food from McDonald's to Saipan," he said. "My father thought it would be nice for Saipan to have its own McDonald's. That was the start of his vision to bring McDonald's into the CNMI and it became a reality 25 years ago."

With food that is accessible, affordable, and taste that is globally appreciated, McDonald's is already a household name. It is one of the largest restaurant chains in the world, serving over millions of customers every day.

To sustain that reputation on a small island such as Saipan, Ayuyu Jr. said the formula to their success is simple. "The most important thing is that we are providing a service that is needed in the community and part of that service is taking care of our customers," he said.

He pointed out that McDonald's is, above all, about families and taking care of its customers. That means "treating them right, making quality food for them, having fast service, providing reasonable prices, and providing an environment where they can come and spend time with their families."

Ayuyu Jr. said the journey to get to where McDonald's Saipan is now has been very interesting.

"Like any other business, we have our ups and downs. However, we are very proud to say that, as we celebrate 25 years, our company has remained strong and we are a source of employment."

"During the hard times, when the CNMI economy was suffering, we are very proud that we did not lay off any employees, cut hours, or close the business. We remained strong and the reason behind it was we have a strong community support that we earned by being one with and doing things with the community," he added.

According to Ayuyu Jr., McDonald's will continue evolving, keeping things dynamic and responsive to the changing times.

"Right now, we are undergoing a lot of changes in the company and those changes are included in our Vision 2020. We want to modernize the look of the restaurant from the outside and inside in terms of new décor," he said.

"New technologies will be introduced and coming very soon on island are kiosks and digital menu boards. We have more plans in the pipeline and people can expect a lot of exciting things coming to the restaurants. Rather than waiting for another 25 years, we're bringing these changes in the next three years," he added.

Aside from running a food business, McDonald's is also pro-environment, supports sports teams, sponsors with donations, and last November, provided a venue for the first Coffee with a Cop held at McDonald's Middle Road. CNMI Department of Public Safety officers were given a venue and a chance to interact with the community.

"We are believers that our success is dependent on the success of the community. It makes a lot of sense to work with the community that makes us successful... we want to be known as a fun place where families can go to and enjoy eating together. We want to be the customer's

See McDonald's on **Page 14**

McDONALD'S
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Customers Appreciation Raffle

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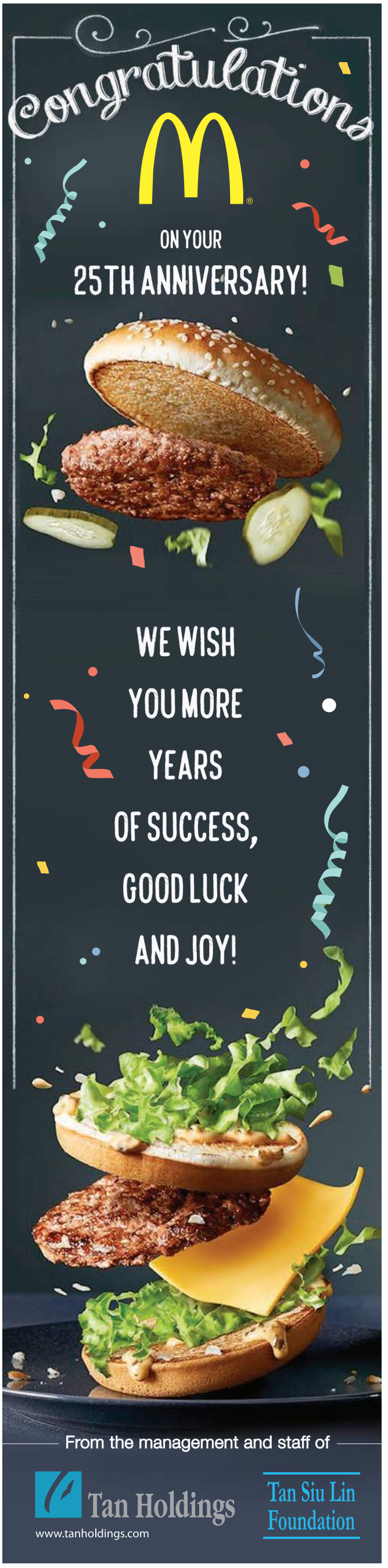

McDonald's Middle Road crew.

McDonald's office staff.

MCDONALD'S

From Page 13

favorite place," Ayuyu Jr. said.

"We are always evolving and we are finding ways not only to provide enjoyment for families but also to protect the environment. Our focus is in our operations and whenever opportunities come up to improve and initiate things for the preservation of the environment, we do it," Ayuyu Jr. added.

To give thanks to the community, McDonald's has a customer appreciation raffle for those who buy any Extra Value Meal. The grand draw on Saturday, March 17, will be held at McDonald's Middle Road at 3pm.

"We are giving away 25 prizes with a grand prize of a roundtrip ticket to Manila, second prize is a Samsung Galaxy 8 Plus with free six-month plan, third prize is a 55" flatscreen colored television and fourth prize is a roundtrip ticket to Guam for one," Ayuyu Jr. said. "We are also having an employee appreciation raffle and an appreciation dinner for our

See McDonald's on next page

McDonald's Garapan branch management team.

MCDONALD'S

From Page 14

vendors. It is our way of thanking them for being our business partners for 25 years."

McDonald's on Saipan stands ready to face the years to come.

"McDonald's is very happy to continue serving the community as our roots are here and we're not going anywhere. Whether the economy is in good or bad shape, we are here to serve our community," Ayuyu Jr. said.

"The most important lesson I can share is the restaurant being always ready to serve the community, especially in time of disasters. McDonald's is one of the companies that provided food right after Typhoon Soudelor. We will always be at the forefront because our commitment is more than just food service but also community service," Ayuyu Jr. added.

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COTA undergoes more training as it preps for transit system

Operations and Maintenance coordinator Jose "Ping" Santos discusses the first phase of route planning for the fixed-route system to include realistic tests and costs associated with the CNMI's first public transit system.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority, which is developing a transit system for the CNMI, continues its momentum on passenger assistance and sensitivity training since receiving full certification by the Community Transportation Association of America, according to Alfreda P. Camacho, the special assistant for Public Transportation.

"We have come a long way and continue to build our capacity and our personnel for the diverse clients we expect to avail of our services in the near future. We've made it standard procedure for our dispatchers and drivers to practice the highest level of conduct demonstrated in transit services both locally and nationally. We know that in order for COTA to continue delivering safe and courteous transit services for our community, the proper training opportunities should be afforded to the team regularly and we are receiving more positive feedback as a result," Camacho said.

Camacho added that they remain committed to quality service regardless of race, color or national origin, and promote full and fair participation of transit services.

Since acquiring mobility equipped vans and an American with Disabilities Act-accessible transit bus, personnel preparation for the upcoming transit system, to be called Fixed Route Transit System, has been the central focus, said COTA community planner Diego B. Songsong.

"I want to reiterate and share that we've completed the State Management Review audit with the Federal Transit Administration through the U.S. Department of Transportation. Additionally, we've completed the A&E design services for the administrative building and maintenance facility and are currently soliciting for a contractor. With so much moving parts, we want to make sure we are prepared in all ways possible," Songsong said.

Camacho added that they have also implemented the transportation software tracking system for better visibility of scheduling and dispatching data.

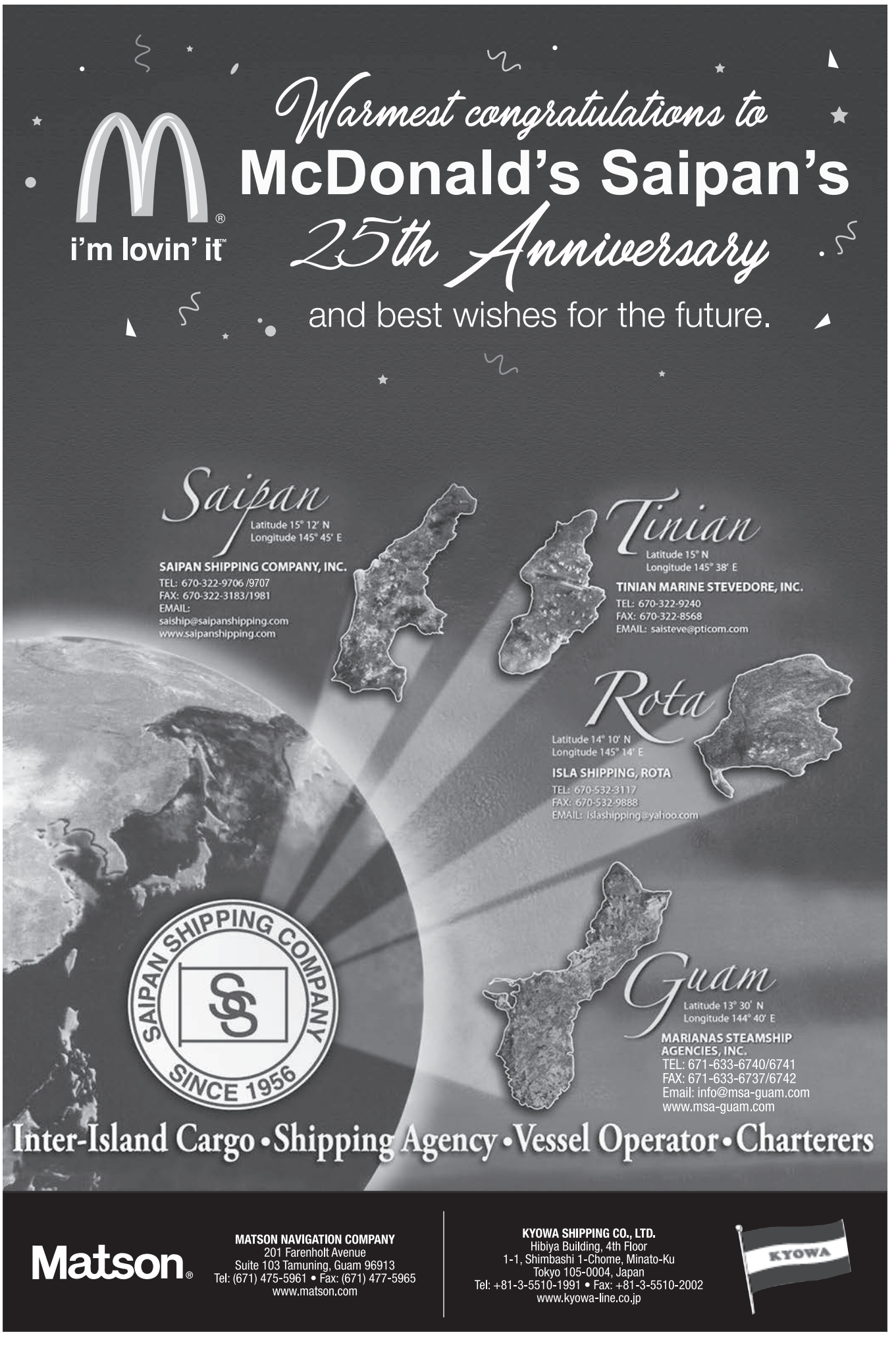
"It is important to note that the acquisition of ADA-accessible bus is to conduct realistic tests and route planning versus pre-planning estimates on operational projections and costs associated with the CNMI's first public transit system.

"I feel that, at the same time, we must continue training our personnel to uphold their safety and ethical conduct. As we move forward, it is our hope that this careful planning will foresee any potential obstacles and ensure sustainable and safe transportation for our community," Camacho said.

Noting the strides that COTA has made despite the challenges in public transportation, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres praised COTA for its ongoing capacity building and assistance with elderly, military veterans and para-transit services.

"We know that access to transportation is the single most important factor in an individual's ability to escape poverty. The journey to developing the fixed route system has been met with numerous challenges but COTA has demonstrated its commitment.

"I am pleased with the meticulous planning that has brought the agency to the point of having something tangible for the community to see. Although there is still more work to be done, COTA has ensured that we can present a safe, responsive, and efficient system moving forward," Torres said. ***(PR)***



STUCO leaders to host summit

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Student council leaders of each high school in the Commonwealth will host the first student-organized youth summit this April.

According to Tinian Jr./Sr. High School Student Council president Mariah Cruz, she and her team of 15 other STUCO leaders from various high schools in the Commonwealth are putting the final touches on their first youth summit.

Cruz said at the Board of Education meeting Wednesday that the summit will touch on most of the issues that the youth of the Marianas face today like alcohol, bullying, self-harm, smoking, and sexual education.

Cruz believes that the summit is important to strengthen and empower the teens of today and to also educate them on how they can handle certain situations. The theme will be "SEE Yourself: Strengthen. Educate. Empower."

Cruz said that she and 15 other STUCO leaders will be heading to Guam today for a two-day conference called "Youth for Youth," where they hope to learn from and replicate so that they can bring it back to the Marianas for the youth who cannot attend the conference.

The SEE Yourself summit will be on April 2 at the Saipan World Resort, from 9am to 3pm.

For additional information, contact Jackie Quitugua, Public School System's Curriculum and Instructional Services associate commissioner, at jackie.quitugua@cnmipss.og or 322-3506.

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Opinion

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How did we go from a country everyone admired to one pitied for gun violence?

By REKHA BASU
Des Moines Register

Rekha Basu is a columnist for the Des Moines Register. *Readers may send her email at rbasu@dmreg.com.*

I was in India with two American friends when 19-year old Nikolas Cruz shot and killed 17 students and staff at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School with a legally bought AR-15-style rifle.

Following the horrifying events from some 10,000 miles away, we struggled to answer people's questions about why mass shootings happen with such predictable frequency in America.

India has its problems, plenty of them. But one problem the world's largest democracy doesn't have is mass legally sanctioned gun ownership. That's because it has some of the strictest gun laws in the world, while the United States has some of the laxest. In India, there are an estimated 4.2 guns per 100 people. America has 88.8 guns per 100 people.

Getting a gun license in India can take months or years. It requires proof of training, and authorities must be persuaded that you face a major threat. The applicant must be at least 21. Past criminal histories and violent behavior are checked; addresses are verified. Neighbors are questioned about the applicant. A police interview is required. Once approved, guns must be carried in holders and stored in gun lockers in the house. Automatic rifles are prohibited.

That doesn't mean there are no gun homicides in India, but the vast majority of those are committed with weapons illegally smuggled across the border. A total of 322 people were murdered by licensed firearms in 2016 in the country of 1.3 billion people; 3,453 were murdered with unlicensed ones.

In the United States, an average of 34 people are murdered every day with guns; that's 12,410 a year.

"We are a country that won independence from colonial rulers without firing a single shot," Binalakshmi Nepram, the founder of Control Arms Foundation of India has observed of the Mahatma Gandhi-led nonviolent civil disobedience campaign for freedom from British rule. It's not uncommon for U.S. opponents of gun regulations to speak of an armed public as the best defense against the tyranny of government. But as India showed, peaceful mass resistance can be an equally potent weapon.

"If guns make us safe, America should have been the safest nation in world," Nepram told The Hindustan Times. Good point. An American is 12 times more likely to be killed by a firearm than is an Indian, according to a Washington Post story.

But the point isn't lost only on Americans who resist gun-safety controls. A growing number of pro-gun groups in India, taking their cue from the U.S., also argue that allowing civilians to legally arm themselves would make India safer. At least they

See HOW on Next Page

OK, but first...

By ED STEPHENS
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Visit Ed Stephens Jr. at EdStephensJr.com. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the Saipan Tribune.

You probably think I'm shallow just because I get my philosophy from bumper stickers and country-western songs. However, I also get my wisdom from slogans printed on T-shirts. Here's something I saw on a shirt recently: "OK, but first, coffee."

Well, those were the words, at least, but I'm going from memory and the punctuation probably reflects my fetish for commas.

Anyway, if coffee comes first, then what comes second is shopping for an expensive new coffee maker. The last generation of expensive new coffee makers didn't seem to last very long. What the generations have in common is that the proprietary breed of coffee pods they digest is, cost-wise, the caffeinated version of caviar.

Sometimes it's not too expensive if addressed with careful shopping, but having to shop carefully for coffee isn't something I want to devote any attention to.

And attention is necessary for these things. For example, KDKA-TV (Pittsburgh) swabbed the inside of some coffee makers and sent the samples to a lab. In a 2015 report they said that some of the coffee makers harbored bacteria and mold. The machines require a cleaning regimen to keep fit.

One day, during a blackout, when I had to fortify myself with coffee to confront the rigors of the situation, I saw my expensive coffee machine sitting, darkened and lifeless, on the counter. You might ask where my emergency generator was. It was in the back of my truck. You might ask why I didn't hook it up to the home power buss.

Well, OK. I'll do that. But first, coffee. And, not that I get cranky when I need coffee, but if I want any more suggestions from you about the generator situation, I'll ask, OK?

Anyway, I knew of a Korean-owned *sari-sari* store that would be open. I drove there and bought a jar of Folgers instant coffee. I drove back to the homestead, heated a canteen-cup of water camping-style, and I've pretty much been drinking Folgers instant ever since.

I say "pretty much" because, now that I've cast my lot with instant, I recently decided to test another well-known brand, Nescafé.

I wanted to compare these two brands, Folgers and Nescafé, but I'm too lazy to concoct any sort of methodical approach for that. Besides, what's the point? I'm happy with both brands.

My old impressions of instant coffee weren't very good, but there was an element of self-fulfilling prophecy there. For example, I used to buy instant coffee for camping trips. Since I didn't regard the product as an appealing proposition to begin with, I'd buy the cheapest jars of the stuff. Some jars cost less than $1. I would have been better off peeling off the label and boiling that up. It never occurred to me that better coffee would be, well, better.

Most of my friends are coffee hounds. They, like me, drink the stuff clean, not loaded up with sugar and cream. As much as they like a simple cup of coffee, though, none of them regard instant coffee as a legitimate product. Oh, how déclassé, they sniff. What's next, polyester? Doubts are being expressed about my suitability for polite company.

So I'll tell you a couple of things that I won't bother to tell those snobs. For one thing, instant coffee can be made stronger or weaker on the whim of the moment, with a continuous and infinite array of intermediate strengths, just by adding more coffee grounds or more water. I've never had a coffee maker that could do that on a cup-by-cup basis.

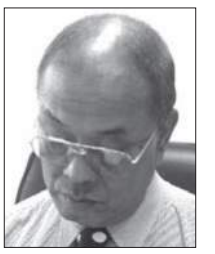
And, for another thing, we coffee hounds have a knack for drinking a cup halfway down, setting it aside to tend something, and then when we finally pick it up again it's cold and unappealing. Instead of making a new cup, though, or having to draw a cup from a funky carafe that's been boiling itself into tar on a burner, with instant you can just add a little bit of coffee and a little more hot water and, presto, you're back in business.

Another benefit: I can leave a jar of instant on my desk and nobody will mess with it. The coffee pods for the machine were, by contrast, always being filched. Instant coffee conveys some sort of retro mystery, like some sort of bronze and intricate Middle Ages astronomical sighting device. It might be intriguing from a safe distance, but who knows what will happen if you pick it up, or, god forbid, if you wind up confronting the sort of eccentric that would own and operate such a thing?

Well, that's all I've got to say about coffee. I guess you'd like to talk about the generator now, right? I thought so. Unfortunately, I have to keep an appointment with my tailor. He's in Kowloon. Does anybody know how to say "leisure suit" in Cantonese?

Emerging national debate

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune



John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the* Saipan Tribune.

President Trump descended on California to show Gov. J. Brown that federal laws, including federal immigration laws and policies, are the "law of the land."

Brown tried throwing a legal curve ball that he doesn't have to abide by instructions issued by Trump on immigration. While Trump wants to build a wall, Brown works on building filthy bridges, one tent at a time, along city streets all over California occupied by millions of homeless folks.

Brown may have his own opinion legal or otherwise but the supremacy of laws has long been resolved since the days of our 16th president. Whatever happened to the land of nuts, fruits, and berries? How does he pay up his $958 billion deficit? Has it turned simply "nuts?" Notice Trump didn't have to enter California illegally?

■■■

Chicago is haggling over granting prisoners their rights to vote involving some 7,000 inmates. It definitely could make a difference in who gets elected. At issue is whether conviction and incarceration deny prisoners their voting rights. It would be one long debate ahead. I think it needs to be defined so to clear the air.

■■■

Rep. Maxine Waters of California is beginning to be my favorite member of the U.S. House of Representatives. She wanted to prove she's got smarts. So she took an IQ test. The lab folks came back, saying, "Your IQ test came back negative!" Whoa!

She was fuming mad, complaining, "How could that be when California is the largest welfare state in the country with a deficit of some $958 billion!" Said Magoo, "Now that's some IQ, huh?"

■■■

Revisiting: The word "unaccountability" sounds big but when you break it down it simply means the lack of accountability (holding someone responsible) for use of public funds (taxpayers' tax contributions) especially in government. It's habitually treated with inconsequence. It's our taxes, isn't it?

■■■

Or why is Boating Safety out guarding the governor and his brothers on an all-night fishing trip? Heard this has been going on for the last two years. Isn't this a federally funded program? Isn't this sacrificing public safety because Raffy and siblings had to be guarded while fishing up north?

■■■

There's the boastful claim of "surplus" funds, yet our share on Medicaid to the tune of $14 million hasn't been paid. Isn't it true that the program accommodates a lot of our people meeting health costs?

■■■

Then there's the granddaddy of them all: the $400,000 that Biktot Hokog engineered for the MV *Luta*, a business owned by his family. Has the AG moved to recoup our hard-earned tax contributions? It would be good to find out, via an ocular review by OPA, how the funds were spent. Should be interesting reading all the way around.

■■■

We toy around with $250,000 for an aviator's monument when we can't even afford toilet tissues for CHC and the Public School System? Mind-boggling!

■■■

Has the NMI done a desk audit to determine actual staff requirement like DPL did some eight years ago? It's the only way to find out personnel needs, staff salary and whether staff income is commensurate with qualifications, etc.

It was appalling to learn that a staff secretary was making more money than the departmental secretary! Had to clean out the mess once and for all! Plus, it's good to use the merit system where dedicated employees aren't skipped of what's rightfully theirs over others who employ Pinocchio's nose!

This is mandatory to save taxpayers paying for the largess of politicians who have no clue that for every political hire added to their payroll we the taxpayers pay for their salaries and benefits or excesses. Enough is enough!

■■■

We spend $13 million-$15 million on medical referral per year for hospitals between Guam, Manila, and Honolulu. Has CHC looked into funneling some of these funds to improve medical services here? Or is the issue taken for granted for as long as we could fork out the cost of the program? What if local funds head south?

■■■

Under the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Council, the NMI was granted 1,000 or so metric ton of migratory fish for longliners. What's the benefit to the NMI when it gives this to permitted longliners? Can someone quantify this in terms of dollar figure accruing to the local coffers?

■■■

Finally, there's renaissance in cultural revival. How much of the total financial resources of the NMI are earmarked for this purpose? It should be understood, though, that PSS teaches the vernacular to our children. If it needs more to strengthen this program then let it be. What about other agencies dedicated to indigenous culture? Have they fulfilled constitutional mandates?

Institutional zip

Through the years we've seen the emergence, disappearance and re-emergence of the local farmers' organization. The head pop and drop phenomenon has happened over the last five decades. It piqued my interest why the wobbly activities without steady foundation. Throughout the period we hardly see rock solid programs that focus on the needs and interests of local farmers.

It seems obvious the organization lacks mindful leadership to guide the work of the group forward so something solid happens that benefits farmers. It takes more than organizational issues.

It means buckling down to putting some real teeth into issues and concerns of farmers. Initially, it could begin purposeful study what their immediate and long-term needs are and how to achieve them. It's a matter of definition of goals and objectives including opening an office to handle the needs of the organization. After all, these are simple folks who do better with their garden hoes than fiddling with a pen.

A lot can be done but it begins with the self in organized fashion, including exploring funding opportunities with the Commonwealth Development Authority, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Small Business Administration. Unless it truly organizes its mission with a purpose, it's bound to repeat the same failure year after year. I may ruffle some feathers but it's time to bring the issue right into the farmers' garden.

End the tax on working families

By GREGORIO KILILI C. SABLAN
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Working families in the Marianas should not be forgotten—especially in this time of economic growth, when the Commonwealth government is spending money on lots of other priorities. That is why I recommended to the Legislature ending the local tax on the Earned Income Tax Credit, or EITC.

The Marianas is the only place in our nation that uses the Internal Revenue Code and does not give taxpayers the full benefit of the EITC. In all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, the EITC puts extra money in the pockets of working families. And the tax credit—an estimated $16 million in the Marianas—stimulates the economy. Families spend their EITC money paying bills, improving their homes, and shopping at local businesses.

Who is eligible for the EITC

In 2017, a family of four with income below $50,597 was eligible for an Earned Income Tax Credit up to $5,616. The EITC is first used to pay any tax the family owes. The unused balance is then paid to them as a refund check.

Only U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents qualify and they have to be employed. So, the additional EITC income can be part of the larger strategy to build a local workforce, just like the recent collaboration of Triple J and the Northern Marianas Trades Institute will do, and my own legislation, the Northern Mariana Islands U.S. Workforce Act.

The EITC should be available in full to Marianas taxpayers

Section 601 of the Covenant provides that the income tax laws of the U.S. shall apply in the Marianas, and the federal tax code includes the Earned Income Tax Credit.

But, in 1998, the Commonwealth Legislature imposed a 100-percent tax on the EITC refund, taking money away from families who live paycheck to -paycheck. The findings in CNMI Public Law 11-25 declared that "the Commonwealth government can no longer afford to pay this credit."

The Marianas is not the only place that had trouble paying the EITC. In Guam, the government stopped paying the tax credit, too. But in Guam the Legislature and taxpayers took the administration to court. And they won.

Both the Guam Supreme Court and the U.S. District Court of Guam determined that the government of Guam must pay the EITC because—like the Marianas—Guam's tax law mirrors the federal tax code.

The EITC is a local responsibility

Paying the EITC was a local responsibility in the Marianas until the Legislature decided it was too expensive. And it remains a local responsibility.

In the last Congress, however, I introduced legislation to provide federal funds to the territories to pay for the cost of the EITC. H.R. 4309 was a bipartisan bill, co-sponsored by the Republican delegate of American Samoa, and the Democratic delegates of Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. It received the support of the Obama administration. Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and his Section 902 team also endorsed the proposal. But the cost is $10 billion. That is a hard sell, especially when Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands are already paying the EITC with local funds.

Standing up for working families

I will keep working for that federal funding. In the meantime, I believe the Commonwealth Legislature should reconsider its own responsibility. Those who say we have limited resources only mean they want to spend the money on something else. When there is zero local gaming tax on a billion-dollar casino, a 100 percent local tax on working families looks like a misplaced priority. When the Legislature is finding the resources to raise pay for lawmakers, elected officials, and appointed Cabinet members, there should be enough to end the local tax on working families, too.

Senate President Arnold Palacios and Rep. Ed Propst have already said they are willing to consider how to get it done.

As our economy grows and government spending increases, I believe it is important to speak up for the many Marianas families who should be getting all of the Earned Income Tax Credit. I will continue to be a voice for those who are working hard to make sure their children have health care, food on the table, a good education, and all the necessities of life.

Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) is the delegate of the Commonwealth of the Marana Islands in the U.S. Congress.

HOW

From Page 19

can't claim a constitutional right to be armed; India's constitution has no Second Amendment-equivalent. But then, those resisting any gun restrictions in America distort that right as if it were unfettered.

India's laws aren't indifferent to the need for self-protection, especially for women in the wake of some notorious gang rapes. The government has permitted taser guns for personal use as well as by guards patrolling banks and public places. Women have started carrying pepper spray and learning martial arts.

As we traveled in India, one of my friends stayed glued to the web for updates on the burgeoning student activism in the wake of the Florida shootings. We cheered to hear that Dick's Sporting Goods, Walmart and Kroger had responded by agreeing to no longer sell guns to people under 21.

Dick's also won't sell assault weapons or high-capacity magazines. Its CEO went even further by calling for a government ban on assault-style weapons, high-capacity magazines and bump stocks, increasing the minimum age for gun purchases, requiring expanded universal background checks, and closing the gun show loophole. Sizable majorities of Americans support universal background checks, a 21 minimum purchase age, and bans on assault style weapons and high-capacity magazines.

And Florida's Legislature passed a bill to tighten that state's gun restrictions. Though it wouldn't ban assault weapons as the students had advocated, and it would regrettably arm school personnel, it does raise the minimum age for purchase to 21, impose a three-day wait on gun purchases and bans bump stocks.

Responding to the Florida carnage, a French friend visiting Delhi expressed amazement at America's love affair with lethal weapons. France doesn't recognize any right of civilians to bear arms. It requires a hunting or sporting license and a psychological evaluation to own a gun. We had to explain to this friend the immense political clout of the National Rifle Association, which spent $419 million on ads, lobbying and political campaigns in the 2016 election cycle.

She rolled her eyes and said she was sorry for us.

How did we go from being the richest, most powerful natiion in the world, one everyone wanted to live in, to one that elicits pity from outsiders?

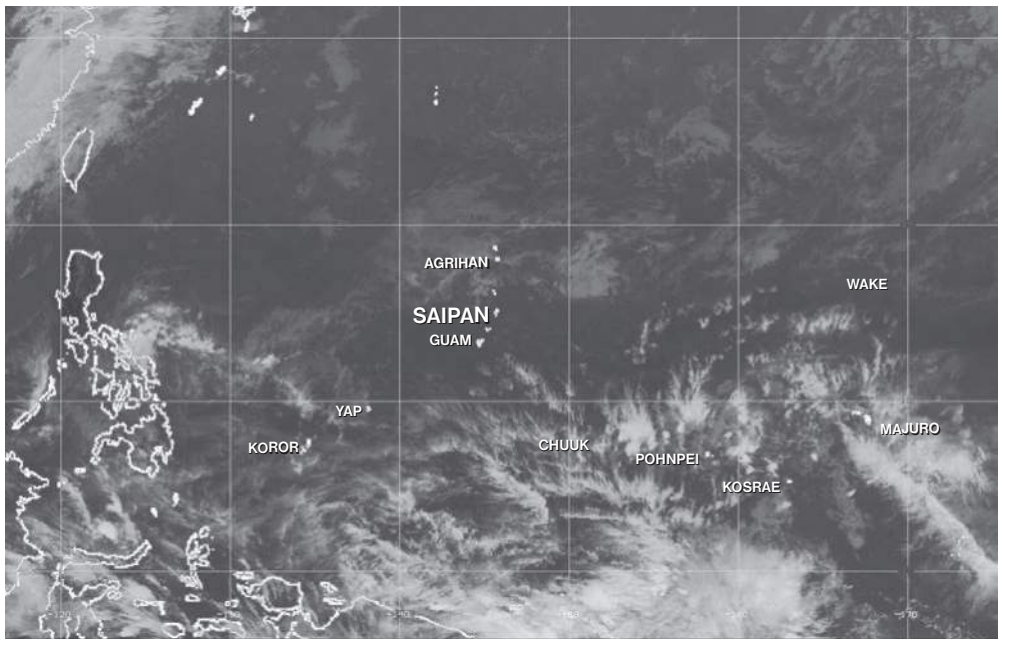
Enough is enough. This is a defining American issue and the moment to speak out and lobby our leaders is now. Some gutsy teen-agers too young to have been bought and too aware of what's at stake are depending on us. We can't let them down.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph becoming northeast Saturday.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲89° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲89° ▼77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:00 AM, THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 2018
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

The weather will change little the rest of this week, with limited moisture keeping showers isolated. Winds will increase a little tonight, and will be moderate to fresh through the weekend. North swell is diminishing at the buoys, while east swell is slowly building. Have ended the high surf advisory, and brought the rip risk to moderate. However, rising east swell is expected to increase the risk back to high along east facing reefs Thursday, continuing into the weekend as east swell persists.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	86° / 76°
Palau	Thunderstorm	85° / 78°
Yap	Thunderstorm	86° / 79°
Chuuk	Showers	85° / 80°
Pohnpei	Showers	82° / 77°
Kosrae	Showers	82° / 77°
Majuro	Thunderstorm	83° / 79°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Showers	72° / 63°
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	48° / 30°
Hong Kong	Sunny	73° / 66°
Honolulu	Showers	84° / 72°
London	Showers	52° / 34°
Los Angeles	Showers	60° / 50°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	93° / 79°
Melbourne	Windy	93° / 73°
Miami	Sunny	74° / 64°
New York	Partly Cloudy	38° / 28°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	63° / 45°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	55° / 39°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	54° / 39°
Rome	Rain	61° / 50°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	71° / 55°
San Francisco	Showers	51° / 43°
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	57° / 37°
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	55° / 43°
Washington, DC	Windy	42° / 29°

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- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
1:10 AM	LOW TIDE	0.02
7:39 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.85
1:36 PM	LOW TIDE	0.79
6:58 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.86

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:21 AM	6:27 PM
Saturday	6:23 AM	6:27 PM
Sunday	6:23 AM	6:27 PM
Monday	6:22 AM	6:27 PM
Tuesday	6:22 AM	6:27 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	5:25 am	5:24 pm	-
Saturday	6:07 am	6:15 pm	-
Sunday	6:49 am	7:07 pm	-
Monday	7:30 am	7:59 pm	-
Tuesday	8:13 am	8:53 pm	-

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 19, 2017

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA6394	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA6392	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA6391	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA6390	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA6398	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA6396	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA6391	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA6391	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL297	4:20pm	7:15pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:10am	6:10am	1, 7
7C3451	4:00am	7:05am	4, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

TW308	2:00am	6:05am	Daily
OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
LJ652	3:40am	7:30am	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3403	4:45am	8:30am	Daily
7C3401	4:00pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	5:40am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:30am	12:00pm	1
JD396	4:50pm	10:00pm	4

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:10am	10:55am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:55am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA6394/191	4:15am	9:00am	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	8:10am	7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6398/193	6:05pm	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7
UA6398/159	6:05pm	11:00pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA6393	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA6395	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA6391	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA6390	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA6397	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA6399	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA6390	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA6390	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:00pm	2:10am+1	4
7C3452	9:05pm	2:10am+1	3, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	9:30am	3:00pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
TW307	7:45pm	1:00am+1	Daily
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
LJ651	9:10pm	2:40am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:25am	3:30pm	4
JD395	9:55pm	5:00am+1	7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:25pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA182/6395	12:40am	8:05am	3, 6 via GUM
UA190/6397	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:25pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:25pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/UA6395	10:05pm	8:05am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/6395	10:30pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via ROR-GUM
UA184/6395	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:15pm	12:15am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/6395	11:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, LJ Jin Air, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

GO run with Skechers

Whether you are a seasoned runner trying to earn more miles, a returnee hoping to regain your stride, or a newbie aiming to keep a steady pace, Skechers' GOrun Series is the way to go as far as choosing your footwear is concerned.

This holds true to nearly 50 runners from Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan and Kanoa Resort who raced in the 2018 Saipan Marathon last Saturday using Skechers 15200, one of the featured shoes under Skechers GOrun Ride 7.

"The shoes are light weight and very comfortable," said Kanoa Resort general manager Martin Jambor, who did the 10K race last weekend and have been running on Saipan for three years.

"I bought my first pair of Skechers when I was getting ready for my longest run so far. The Skechers brought me to the finish line of my very first full marathon in 2017, so there is no way for me to go the other way than Sketchers," Jambor said.

Fiesta Resort's Food and Beverage director Das Krishnan, who also did the 10K in last weekend's event, loved that Skechers keeps coming up with lightweight and comfortable shoes without compromising style.

"I like the shape and color, they are bright," said Das, who has been using Skechers since 2012 when he raced in half marathon.

Alyona Gersonde is a late starter on Saipan road running, having joined Saipan Marathon just in 2015 and she was grateful she began her journey with Skechers.

"Buying running shoes is the most important purchase you'll make as a runner. And I'm absolutely in love with my new pair of Skechers, they are well cushioned, light, and breathable—perfect for our climate here," said Gersonde.

"I am not a professional athlete so I can say Skechers helped me win in full marathon in my age group this year," said Gersonde, who also prevailed in half marathon in 2016.

Angeline Velasco, also from Fiesta Resort, returned to road racing after missing Saipan Marathon for three years, and Skechers made her comeback easier.

"Running is difficult the first time I joined, but this year to be honest it is much easier because the (Skechers) shoes made me feel light and comfortable," Velasco said.

Kanoa Resort's Dindo Pablo raced in the 10K for the first time and the switch from basketball shoes to running was not difficult for him, thanks to Skechers.

"The lightweight feature of the shoes makes running less harder and gives more comfort to us, especially to those new in running long distance," said Pablo, adding that Skechers lived up to expectations with its trendy style.

Skechers 15200 is part of the legendary GOrun Ride series, which continues to innovate with the new Skechers Gorun Ride 7. The lightweight and well-cushioned running shoes feature an ultra-lightweight FLIGHT GEN and breathable knit fabric upper overlay.

All new, authentic, and updated style of Skechers are exclusively available at iShop in its three locations—Fiesta Resort, Kanoa Resort, and Paseo De Marianas.

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GORUN RIDE 7™

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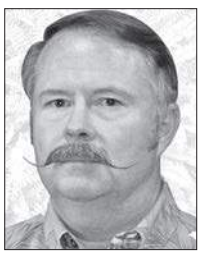
Nat'l Agriculture Day celebrates American food and fiber production

By AL FRENZEL
Special to the Saipan Tribune



Frenzel is the state executive director of the Hawaii and Pacific Basin Farm Service Agency.

March 20 is National Agriculture Day—a day designated each year by the Agriculture Council of America to celebrate the accomplishments of agriculture. The Farm Service Agency joins the council in thanking American agricultural producers, especially in Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, for their contributions to the nation's outstanding quality of life.

This year's theme, "Agriculture: Food for Life," spotlights the hard work of American farmers, ranchers and foresters who diligently work to provide food, fiber and more to the United States and countries around the world. To ensure a prosperous future for American agriculture, FSA provides continuous support to agriculturalists across the country.

FSA is rural America's engine for economic growth, job creation and development, offering local service to millions of rural producers. In fiscal year 2017, USDA Farm Loan programs provided $6 billion in support to producers across America, the second highest total in FSA history. FSA also distributed $1.6 billion in Conservation Reserve Program payments to over 375,000 Americans to improve water quality, reduce soil erosion and increase wildlife habitat.

For agricultural producers who suffered market downturns in 2016, USDA is issuing approximately $8 billion in payments under the Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage programs. USDA also continues to provide extensive assistance in response to natural disasters throughout the country, including last year's hurricanes in Florida, Texas, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, drought in the northern high plains, wildfires in the west and central plains, floods, tornados, freezes and other catastrophic weather events.

To support beginning farmers and ranchers, Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue signed a memorandum of understanding with officials from SCORE, the nation's largest volunteer network of expert business mentors, to support new and beginning farmers. The agreement provides new help and resources for beginning ranchers, veterans, women, socially disadvantaged Americans and others, providing new tools to help them both grow and thrive in agribusiness.

I am honored to administer programs that enable our producers to manage their risks when the agriculture industry faces hardship. On behalf of the Farm Service Agency supporting Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, I would like to thank our agricultural producers for continuing to feed our nation and the world.

For more information about FSA programs and services, visit https://www.fsa.usda.gov/.

LITERAY NOOK

By JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

A trinity of shamrock sonnets

Spud Spouting Sonnet on Irish Greens

On Irish people and the color green in 2018
what else then needs to be said
nothing but a glass of whiskey or *poteen
won't hurt rolling around in your head
Ireland's called the Emerald Isle
it rains a lot there, its green year round
a red haired lass, Irish eyes that smile
shamrocks found on the ground abound
three orange white and green stripes on the flag
wool on their backs, horses, potatoes in their fields
of independence from England Irishmen brag
various grains provide ample beer and whiskey yields
musicians, writers, songs, dances, prose, poetry, verse
in Gaelic and English one hears blessings and curse.

**poteen in Gaelic. Poitin or poicin is whiskey illicitly distilled in Ireland. It is Irish white lightening.*

A Sonnet for Saint Patrick's Day

Green gewgaws appear in variety stores before Valentine's Day
green leprechaun t-shirts, shamrock ties, and hats sold by the score
green beer everywhere, a green river even runs in Chicago today
in New York's parade Irish pipes, policemen, marching bands, more
in Erin folks used to get up and go to morning Mass in a local church
they'd eat a simple meal of beef, potatoes, tea, and Irish soda bread
Irish will leave the big green scene commercial machine in the lurch
while from underneath ladies wool scarves peeks hair of beautiful red
St. Patrick departed the Emerald Isle over fourteen hundred years ago
kidnapped in Scotland and brought as a slave to Erin when a young boy
after six years he escaped to return to Scotland in a boat he could row
he later returned to Ireland bringing Druids Irish Catholic guilt and joy
now Patrick is used as an excuse for people to drink booze like a fish
from green beer to Irish whiskey dear – they all wish they were Irish.

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey "Pepe Batbon" Connolly is a retired teacher and poet living on Tinian who taught English in CNMI public schools for the past 30 years. He has also taught in Alaska, New Orleans, and Las Vegas.

The Old Sot and The Old Sod

An Irish American reverie by Joey Leahy Connolly

If I should pass out think but this of me
that there's a small corner of this old pub
that is forever Ireland and will be
a place you can eat some decent pub grub
outside is Ireland the sot dreams aware
he's back there in his drunken present state
tasting Irish cheese eating Irish fare
washed down with beer a corned beef cabbage plate
he'll have one more pint drink it right away
a drop now of Tullamore Dew no less
takes him back his thought by Ireland given
earphones sing with harps, strings and pipes today
Laoise Kelly, Teada, pipes and songs by Seamus Ennis
his heart at peace now in an Irish heaven.

Laoise Kelly is a traditional Irish harper, Teada, which means strings in Gaelic, is a traditional Irish band. Seamus Ennis musician, Uillean piper, 1919 -1982)

In It's A Long Way To Tipperary, some readers may know this popular old Irish song. Well, it is a long ways from Tinian to County Tipperary in Ireland—12,080 kilometers or 7,506 miles, to be exact. The "old sod" is an endearing term used by many Irish when referring to their mother country. "Slainte" refers to a Gaelic wish: Slainte chuig na fir, agus go mairfidh na mna' go deo (Health to the men, and may the women live forever.). I am of Irish-American heritage. My father's side is from Galway and my mother's Conroy/Leahy side is from Limerick and Cork.

Happy St. Patrick's Day 2018.

AmeriCorps members making a difference in students' lives

By JUDITH F. CLARK
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Joining the AmeriCorps program is one of the best decisions I've made in my life.... It is a job where we make a difference in many people's life and the community.
AmeriCorps has really given me the chance to learn what it takes as a leader, a community member, and a teacher.

These statements come from AmeriCorps members Reflection Journals. The members are high school students in the Northern Mariana Islands who are serving as tutors and mentors to students in elementary

See AMERICORPS on Page 24

Donovan Castro
Head Baker
Great Harvest Bread Co.
Culinary Arts Graduate

Ric Cruz
HR Talent Devel. Officer
Kanoa Resort
H & R Program Graduate

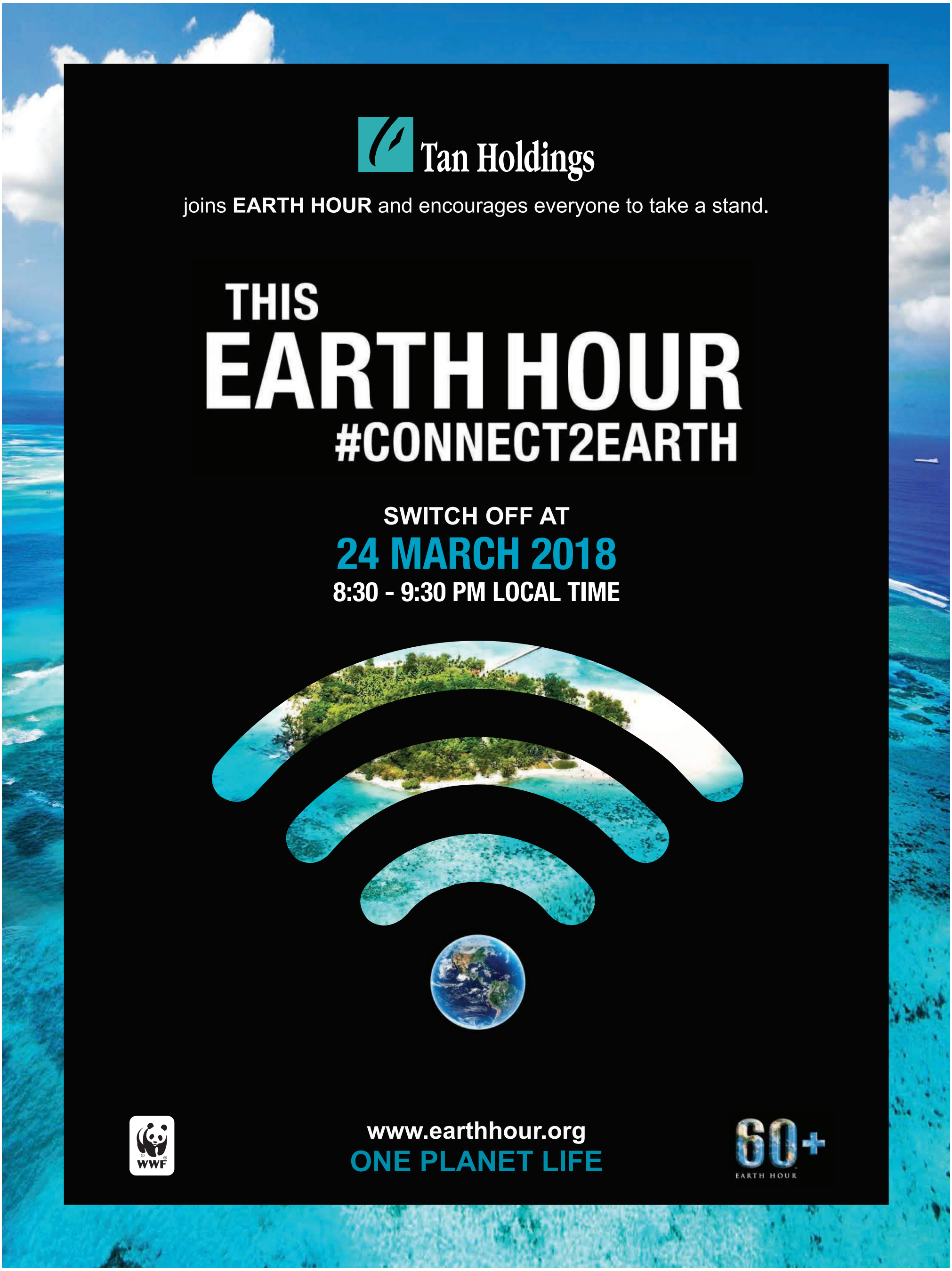
Sid Romolor
Cook
The Shack Saipan
Culinary Arts Graduate

Toki Mojica
Legislative Staffer
Rep. Frank Delacruz
H & R Program Graduate

Register now. Call Mae 235-6684

The Northern Marianas Trades Institute admits students of any race, color, national origin, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the institute. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarships and loan programs, and other institute-administered programs.

NMTI Northern Marianas Trades Institute Building Skills for a Lifetime


Tan Holdings
joins EARTH HOUR and encourages everyone to take a stand.
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WWF
60+
EARTH HOUR

Do we really want to turn our teachers into warriors?

By PAUL BARKER
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

I commanded a Marine rifle platoon in Vietnam. I'm a former National Rifle Association member, a former elementary school teacher, a gun owner and a progressive.

I think guns can be fun, if handled responsibly, like fireworks. They make us feel powerful in a threatening world.

Guns aren't fun in combat. Warfare is not an exciting experience of invulnerability and heroism, as it is sometimes portrayed in our media.

Killing anyone, even in defense of yourself or your family, is not consequence-free. Even if you're legally justified, taking a life establishes a relationship between you and that person's family that haunts you for the rest of your life. In combat you learn a little about the life you've taken by searching through their belongings for potential intelligence and instead finding love letters, religious and good luck amulets and a precious photo or two. The first time you kill someone is the most disturbing and memorable, but every face of every kill is never far from your mind, running like a film loop.

The illusion of invulnerability quickly dissipates in an actual firefight. Even the best protective equipment is laughably inadequate. A helmet and flak jacket will stop some shrapnel but not a bullet. Your face, crotch, neck and limbs are protected only by fabric, and a wound there can be fatal. And nothing can protect your internal organs from the blast wave of high explosives. The best-equipped soldier today is still all offense and little defense. Your fate is determined by a roll of the dice.

Once you recognize the luck factor, it changes how you see the job. As an officer, I was asking my troops to press their luck to the breaking point. In a firefight, invisible bits of hot metal fly everywhere, they go through windows, walls and doors, they ricochet off steel beams, stairs and handrails. They can go through one person and kill another. In urban warfare you can't hear where the shots are coming from because the reports echo off multiple surfaces; to see an opponent is to expose yourself to gunfire.

In the confusion and terror, your hands shake, your brain freezes, you expend every ounce of energy even on the most trivial actions. Your perception of time is altered. You make complicated decisions with inadequate information, in fractions of a second, knowing that your life could end in the next instant.

When I hear people talk about arming schoolteachers, I imagine a mild-mannered poetry teacher who has never raised her hand in anger, pulling her Glock out of a desk drawer. I imagine how she would fare if she were confronted by a shooter amid crumpled bodies in pools of blood. I think about how she'd feel if she mistakenly shot a student, fellow teacher or first responder.

I think such a teacher would be traumatized for life. She didn't become a teacher to be a warrior. Arming her is a simplistic, ill-conceived idea based on a failure to appreciate the nature of combat.

Paul Barker is an Evanston, Ill., artist, former teacher and former U.S. Marine. He wrote this for the Chicago Tribune.

AMERICORPS

From Page 24

schools.

These young people are making a huge difference in the lives of children they teach by helping them acquire the skills they need to succeed in school and in life. They are not doing this just for the monthly stipend and education award or because it will look good on their college applications. Their delight and pride in their students' achievements is evident:

Seeing his face light up because he understood was a great feeling.

The pure joy I feel after seeing them succeed makes everything worth it.

It is also clear that it isn't easy for them. They sacrifice time with their friends and families.

I've missed a lot of club meetings, activities, and even my closest friends' birthday parties to be with my students.

They struggle with student behavioral issues. *The after-school students today were extremely naughty and didn't listen to anything we were saying.*

The AmeriCorps members have doubts about their ability to be effective with students. *Overall I felt that I wasn't doing my "job" as well as I should have and that made me feel underwhelmed.*

In the process, they gain important insights into teaching and learning.

I wanted them to improve their reading levels so desperately that I forget to include colors, creativity, and fun into their learning.

Lessons should be fun and interactive and memorable and that's how you keep knowledge in their minds.

But I also realized that some things are beyond the teacher's control; the students have a responsibility as well. Effort from both sides is essential for the students' success.

Often when we think and talk about youth, we focus on the negatives—graffiti, crimes, disrespectful behavior—and we fail to recognize the many positive influences our youth have on our families and communities. Thank you to all the AmeriCorps members nationwide and all of the other youth who are making the world a better place. I am proud of you.

Judith F. Clark is executive director of the Hawaii Youth Services and network evaluator of the AmeriCorps program in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

DIVISION OF COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Caller Box 10007, Gualo Rai Center, Saipan MP 96950
TEL. NO. 664-8300 FAX NO. 664-8315

NOTICE OF APPLICATION

As of March 16, 2018

THE FOLLOWING IS A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF COASTAL PERMIT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE DCRM OFFICE:

APPLICANT	DATE APPLICATION RECEIVED	APPLICATION PROJECT DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	TYPE	STATUS
1. Fidel Mendiola Jr.	3/2/2018 RSm-2018-X-0228	Shoreline Beautification	Rota, Siyan Gigan	Shoreline	Under Review*
2. Mobile Oil Marianas Inc. dba Rota Bulk Plant Petroleum	3/2/2018 RSm-2018-X-0125	Emergency Notification Signage	Rota	Shoreline	Approved* 3/2/2018
3. United States Navy/CTF73	3/2/2018 SSLRPI-2018-X-044	Salvage & Recovery of MV Lady Carolina	Garapan, Tanapag Harbor	Lagoon & Reef	Under Review*
4. Tinian Shipping Services, LLC	3/7/2018 SPI-2018-X-045	Drydock SN-5 II	South Sea Plan Ramp	Ports & Industrial	Approved* 3/9/2018
5. Marianas Visitors Authority	3/8/2018 SS/LRm-2018-X-046	Tagaman Triathlon Competition	Between Kanoa Resort Beach Side & Kilili Beach	Lagoon & Reef 3/13/2018	Approved*
6. Mei Jun Chen	3/15/2018 SPI-2018-X-047	Land Clearing	Lower Base	Ports & Industrial	Under Review*
7. Phoenix Services, Inc.	3/15/2018 SPI/LR-2018-X-048	Installation of Underwater Water Line	Puerto Rico	Ports & Industrial	Under Review*
8. Palm Resort Hotel	12/11/2017 SMS-2018-X-026	Three Story 47 Room Resort Hotel	Garapan, South of American Memorial Park	Major Siting	Approved

NMIAC §15-10-210 of the CRM Rules and Regulations require all permit applications to be published in a newspaper for general circulation within the CNMI within 15 days of receipt of application. The list reflects recently received permit applications and those with a recent change in status. New applications are marked with an asterisk (*).

The Public is invited to submit written comments regarding any of the above projects for which a permit decision has not been issued. All permit comments should identify the project by application number. Your comments should be mailed or hand-delivered to the DCRM Office. All persons who desire a public hearing regarding any project may do so by submitting a written request for a public hearing to the DCRM Office within fourteen (14) days for minor permits (APCs) and proposed amended major sitings. Public Hearings are required for all new major siting projects. All public hearing notices are published in a local newspaper of general circulation. Residents of Rota and Tinian may submit comments and hearing requests to their local DCRM Coordinator. Persons wishing to retain the right to appeal a DCRM Permit decision must file a notice of appeal with the DCRM office within thirty (30) days of the issuance of the DCRM permit decision as provided in Part 200 § 15-10-235 of the DCRM Regulations.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

When people drown

What happens when you drown?

"The instinct not to breathe underwater is so strong that it overcomes the agony of running out of air. No matter how desperate the drowning person is, he doesn't inhale until he's on the verge of losing consciousness. At that point there's so much carbon dioxide in the blood, and so little oxygen, that chemical sensors in the brain trigger an involuntary breath whether he's underwater or not. That is called the 'break point'; laboratory experiments have shown the break point to come after eighty-seven seconds. It's a sort of neurological optimism, as if the body were saying, Holding our breath is killing us, and breathing in might not kill us, so we might as well breathe in...Until the break point, a drowning person is said to be undergoing 'voluntary apnea,' choosing not to breathe. Lack of oxygen to the brain causes a sensation of darkness closing in from all sides, as in a camera aperture stopping down. The panic of a drowning person is mixed with an odd incredulity that this is actually happening. Having never done it before, the body--and the mind--do not know how to die gracefully. The process is filled with desperation and awkwardness. 'So this is drowning,' a drowning person might think. 'So this is how my life finally ends.'"

Quoted from The Perfect Storm, by Sebastian Junger, published by W. W. Norton & Company, 1997.

Last week a Chinese tourist drowned, just off the reef from Lao Lao Bay. He was 32 years old and was the most recent of many tourist drownings. Tourists have drowned at Managaha, at Forbidden Island, at San Antonio beach, and other local swimming spots.

There are no posted warning signs. I believe that signs could save lives; that these tragic drownings could have been prevented.

Even a simple caution, such as, "If you swim outside the reef, the sea may take you, and you won't come back. Staying in shallow water can reduce your risk of drowning."

The time it takes from when the current first pulls you under until the time you are dead is approximately 3 minutes.

"People drown because they thrash about in the water or expend all of their energy trying to fight the ocean.

"To survive a rip current, you must remain calm, and conserve your energy. If you don't think you can swim all the way back to the beach, get past the rip current and tread water, or swim parallel to the short. Call for help; and if all else fails, wait for the waves to carry you back in.

'If you're on the beach and see somebody else caught in a rip current, call for help from others; if you have a cell phone dial 911 right away. Don't dive in and swim out to the person. It's too risky to swim out there yourself unless you have a raft or life preserver with you. Rip currents are the ocean's number-one killer."

Source (edited from): https://science.howstuffworks.com/environmental/earth/oceanography/rip-current2.htm

I have been in the shallow part of the lagoon at Pau Pau Beach, and felt a current try to drag me out. I got out of the water. No sense risking it.

The only way to prevent future drownings—by either tourists or residents—is for the DPS, the Red Cross, or other local safety agency to post warning signs every 100 feet. Even then, some individuals will still succumb to the ocean, but fewer than if there were no signs at all.

Signs are cheap; human life is not.

Russ Mason
As Teo, Saipan

Most criminal cases in federal court in '17 involved illegal employment

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The nature of most of the criminal cases filed in federal court in 2017 involved the unlawful employment of aliens and harboring illegal aliens.

According to the U.S. District Court for the NMI's 2017 Annual Report statistics, there were 19 criminal cases filed and that 37 percent of those involved the alleged unlawful employment of aliens.

Another 26 percent were for harboring illegal aliens. The rest involved mail fraud, lying in passport applications, methamphetamine, and mail theft.

It was in 2017 when federal agents arrested four persons on charges of harboring illegal aliens in connection with the construction of Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC's casino and resort in Garapan, the Imperial Pacific Resort.

The court report, however, showed that the number of criminal cases decreased slightly in 2017, compared to 2016. From 22 criminal cases in 2016, there were 19 in 2017.

With respect to civil cases, from 34 cases in 2016, the number went down to 23, a 32.35-percent decrease.

The nature of most civil cases filed last year involved contract (22.73 percent) and civil rights acts (18.18 percent).

$653,003 for judicial education and dev't in Pacific

WASHINGTON—The Department of the Interior has authorized the release of $653,003 to the Ninth Circuit Judicial Council Pacific Islands Committee to provide and oversee legal training for fiscal year 2018 in the judiciaries of the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the CNMI, as well as the freely associated states of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, and Palau.

"The rule of law is fundamental for a strong economy and effective democratic rule in any society," said U.S. Interior Assistant Secretary - Insular and International Affairs Doug Domenech.

The Pacific Islands Committee of the Ninth Judicial Circuit was established to fulfill oversight responsibilities with respect to the judiciaries of American Samoa, Guam, the CNMI, the Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, and Palau. All judiciaries in these Pacific Island jurisdictions are modelled after the U.S. judicial system and the Pacific Islands Committee is charged with monitoring their judicial development.

Specific responsibilities of the committee include: 1) assisting in the development and provision of continuing judicial education and court professional training and 2) overall improvement of the administration of justice in the courts.

Support for judiciary systems in the U.S.-affiliated Pacific Islands began as early as 1976 when U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice Warren Burger established a Pacific Territories Committee to develop and work with courts in the U.S.-affiliated Pacific areas, appointing Ninth Circuit Chief Judge Richard Chambers as chair. The Pacific Islands Committee Judiciary Training program continues that work today.

Funding is provided in part through the Technical Assistance Program of the Office of Insular Affairs in the Department of the Interior and through Compact of Free Association funding provided under U.S. Public Law 108-188. ***(PR)***

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

Main Office: FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055, SAIPAN MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax (670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

AMENDED REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS

FOR

AIRPORT GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (AGIS) SURVEY SERVICES BENJAMIN TAISACAN MANGLONA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

PROJECT NO. CPA-RA-001-18 (AIP Pending)

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting statements of professional qualifications from interested Consultants for Airports Geographical Information Systems (AGIS) Services for the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport, Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

These services are being funded by the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and CPA. This service procurement is in accordance with CPA's Procurement Rules and Regulations and procedures shall be in full compliance with Section 40-50-202 Architect-Engineer Design and Construction Management Services.

The Request for Qualification (RFQ) Package is available at CPA's Office of the Executive Director, 2nd floor of the arrival terminal. No fee is required for obtaining the RFQ package.

Questions regarding this request for RFQ statements must be submitted to Ms. Wendi L. Prater, CPA Executive Assistant/Project Manager, at (670) 237-6500, faxed to (670) 234-5962 and/or emailed to wprater@cpa.gov.mp by no later than Friday, March 16, 2018, 5:00 p.m., local time.

At a minimum, the statements of professional qualification will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Capability to perform all or most aspects of the services with a minimum of three (3) years' experience with AGIS and Airport Improvement Programs. **(WEIGHT 30)**
2. Ability to implement an AGIS Obstruction Survey and Airport Airspace Analysis. **(WEIGHT 20)**
3. Key personnel's professional background and successful relevant experience in AGIS projects comparable to the proposed services. **(WEIGHT 20)**
4. Demonstrated ability to meet AGIS standards, NGS requirements, and Airport Master Plan standards. **(WEIGHT 10)**
5. Ability to complete services within schedule without having major extensions, cost escalations, overruns, or disputed claims; **(WEIGHT 10)**
6. Quality of projects previously undertaken that are comparable to proposed services. **(WEIGHT 10)**

Interested Consultants are requested to submit one (1) original, four (4) copies and one (1) electronic version in .pdf format of their statements of professional qualifications no later than **5:00 p.m., MONDAY, MARCH 26, 2018.** Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330.

Discussions may be conducted with at least three (3) of the firms regarding the agreement requirements and technical approach and selection made there from, in order of preference, of no less than three (3) firms determined to be the most highly qualified to perform the services required.

An agreement shall be negotiated with the highest qualified architect/engineer firm or company at a price determined to be fair and reasonable to the government. If a fair and reasonable price cannot be negotiated with the highest ranking qualified firm, then additional firms may be selected in order of competence and qualifications and negotiations continued until a fair and reasonable price is agreed upon.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest.

For the Commonwealth Ports Authority:

/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Date: March 1, 2018

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY(CPA)
CNMI GOVERNMENT

Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950 • Phone: (670) 237-6500 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY (CPA) is inviting qualified bidders to submit their bids for the **FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT EIGHT (8) A/C UNIT REPLACEMENT, PROJECT NO. CPA-SA-004-18.**

Sealed bids will be received at the office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Ports Authority, at Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, at **2:00 PM, FRIDAY, MARCH 23, 2018**, at which time and place the sealed bids will be publicly opened and read.

The Project, in general, consists of replacement of eight (8) air-conditioning units located at the Saipan International Air Terminals. Procurement includes removal and disposal of existing units scheduled for replacement.

The Project is being funded by Commonwealth Ports Authority. The contract award, if it is to be made, will be made within sixty (60) calendar days from the receipt of bids. CPA reserves the right to hold such bids in effect for ninety (90) calendar days from the date of bid opening.

The contract period for installation of eight units shall be **TWO HUNDRED TEN (210) CALENDAR DAYS**. Liquidated damages shall be imposed in the amount of **FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS ($500.00)** per day if the commissioning of the A/C units is delayed beyond the contract time without excuse.

The apparent low bidder may be subject to a thorough and comprehensive review of its Bid Documents to ensure that they are "responsive and responsible." This review will include, but is not necessarily limited to previous project experience, financial capabilities, quality of equipment and personnel, and bonding and insurance. If the apparent low bidder is found not to be "responsive or responsible", their bid will be rejected and the next lowest bidder will be evaluated for qualifications.

All mechanics and laborers on the project shall be paid no less than the minimum wage rate established by the CNMI or the U.S. Secretary of Labor, whichever is higher. A copy of the Department of the Federal Labor Wage Rate Determination is included in Section 70-26 of the specifications. The Contractor shall take into account minimum wage increases that may be imposed in the CNMI over the life of the Contract.

Each bidder must complete, sign, and furnish the "Non-Collusive Affidavit" and "Designation of Subcontractors" as contained in the bid documents, with the submission of the Bid.

Bids and contract documents including specifications may be obtained at the Accounting Department Office, Commonwealth Ports Authority, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, P.O. Box 501055, Saipan, MP 96950, beginning February 23, 2018 upon the payment of **FIFTY DOLLARS ($50.00)** for each set of documents in electronic form (CD) including the bid schedule. This payment is nonrefundable. Payment shall be made in cash, cashier's check or U.S. postal money order payable to the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

There is no pre-bid conference for this project. Bidders will be responsible for scheduling a site inspection with CPA.

Questions should be submitted to the Executive Director, Commonwealth Ports Authority, in writing, at least seven (7) days prior to the bid opening.

Each bid shall be on a form furnished by the Commonwealth Ports Authority. The bidders are encouraged to use the CD bid schedule form. The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids submitted for: (a) any of the reasons set forth in this Notice to Bidders; or (b) any of the reasons set forth in the CPA Procurement Rules and Regulations regarding bid rejection or cancellation; (c) any calculation error made in the bid schedule or misenter the quantity of line item; or (d) sufficient justification exists that awarding the project contract would not be in the best interest of CPA. CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said bids if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest.

Each bidder must supply all information required by the bid documents and specifications.

The EEO requirements, labor provisions, and wage rates are included in the specifications, and bid documents are available for inspection at the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

Each bid shall be accompanied by either bid bond from a CPA approved listed surety company, a certified check or a cashier's check in the amount not less than **ten percent (10%)** of the bid price. Checks shall be made payable to the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY:
/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director
Date: February 20, 2018

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CUC-RFP-18-015

LEASE OF OFFICE/WAREHOUSE SPACE FOR CUC POWER DIVISION TRANSMISSION & DISTRIBUTION SECTION, SAIPAN CNMI

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from firms for the lease of office & warehouse spaces for CUC Power Division, Transmission & Distribution Section in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The proposed office space may be situated within or adjacent to the warehouse. The office & warehouse must have a loading dock and parking stalls that can accommodate over-sized heavy equipment (e. g. bucket trucks, augers and backhoes). Additionally, the proposed office space must conform to American Disabilities Act (ADA), OSHA and CNMI Zoning requirements.

The RFP Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $50.00 (non-refundable) for one RFP package set. Prospective Proposers must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division.

One (1) original and four (4) hard copies, along with an electronic copy of the proposal on a compact disk in PDF format must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked *"CUC-RFP-18-015, Lease of Office/Warehouse Space for CUC Power Division Transmission and Distribution Section, Saipan, CNMI"* to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **April 16, 2018 at 10:00 AM (ChST).** Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible offerors who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Offerors shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity to discussion and revision of proposals, and such revision may be permitted after submission and prior to award for the purpose of obtaining the best and final offers. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing offerors.

All Offeror are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the proposal under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Offeror are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes, which will become the obligation of the proponent awarded a contract. Successful proponents will be required to submit a copy of a valid CNMI Business license in compliance with the Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, upon award of the contract. Proponents shall comply to all applicable CNMI and Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on March 28, 2018** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC, Purchasing Officer via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Lee Lieto, CUC, Acting Power Division Manager via email address lee.lieto@cucgov.org, Adrian Reyes, CUC, Power Division Engineer via email address adrian.reyes@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan, CUC, Purchasing Technician, Senior via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

Community checks out NMC Health Fair

As part of their leadership training and service to the community, members of the Northern Marianas College Nursing Club recently held its 12th Annual Health Fair, where nursing students provided free blood pressure screening, sugar level assessments, and other health services. Other community agencies such as the CHCC Immunization Program, the Division of Youth Services, Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, Commonwealth Cancer Association, and Hardt Eye Clinic also participated in the health fair to showcase their services.

Science Health Math Athletics instructor Lorna Liban, center, presented information about the different foods on island that are known to increase blood glucose and pressure levels. She, along with nursing instructor Ermelinda Oneto, far right, pose for a picture with NMC students at the 12th Annual Health Fair.
NMC

Locally grown fruits and vegetables from NMC's Cooperative Research Extension & Educational Services were highlighted at NMC's 12th Annual Health Fair.
NMC

An NMC Nursing student shares blood pressure information with a health fair participant.
NMC

NMC Nursing students pose for a group photo at their 12th Annual Health Fair that was held at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.
NMC

Hardt Eye Clinic presented information on diabetes awareness and how it affects a person's eyesight at NMC's recent Health Fair. The company's representatives also provided blood glucose screening and information on the services provided at their clinic.
NMC

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
MVA-RFP-18-2011

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

Submission /Closing Date: March 29, 2018 Time: 3:00 p.m.

For: Local Public Relation and Media Services

Submit sealed proposals to: Marianas Visitors Authority, Procurement Office
San Jose Professional Building, Beach Rd., San Jose
P.O. Box 500861, Saipan, MP 96950

Interested parties may pick up the Scope of Work on or after **February 26, 2018**, at the **Marianas Visitors Authority Office, San Jose Professional Building, Beach Road, San Jose, Saipan**, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Proposals submitted from individuals outside the Commonwealth must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or certified courier services by **March 29, 2018**, and must be received within seven (7) working days of that date. Proposers from outside the Commonwealth must notify the MVA/ Mr. David B. Muna in writing of their intent to submit a proposal in order to receive the additional seven (7) days for the receipt of the actual Proposal Documents. Participants outside the **Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands** must submit a **Notice of Intent** by any mode of written communication including facsimile at+1-670-664-3237 or email to dmuna@mymarianas.com, and must be received by 5 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time on **March 29, 2018**.

All questions regarding this RFP must be sent to Mr. David B. Muna at dmuna@mymarianas.com or faxed to +1-670-664-3237, **no later than 5 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time on March 15, 2018.**

/s/ Gloria C. Cavanagh
Chairperson, Board of Directors

/s/ Christopher A. Concepcion
Managing Director

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY(CPA)
CNMI GOVERNMENT

Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950 • Phone: (670) 237-6500 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CPA-RFP-004-18

JANITORIAL SERVICES FOR NON-RESTRICTED AREAS SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT & COMMUTER TERMINAL

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting sealed proposals for Janitorial Services for the Saipan International Airport and Commuter Terminal Non-Restricted Areas.

The proposal package containing the scope of work and other considerations of the proposal is available beginning February 23, 2018 from 0800 hours a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday at the Commonwealth Ports Authority, Accounting Department Office, 2nd Floor, Departure Terminal Building, at the Saipan International Airport upon the payment of ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS ($100.00). This payment is nonrefundable. Payment shall be made in cash, cashier's check or U.S. postal money order payable to the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

Interested proposers must submit one original and three copies of their sealed proposal before 4:00 p.m., March 23, 2018, to the Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Ports Authority, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Saipan International Airport. Proposals shall be sealed and marked: ***"Janitorial Services for non-restricted areas, Saipan International Airport & Commuter Terminal, Project No. CPA-RFP-004-18" CONFIDENTIAL.***

CPA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals if in its opinion to do so is in CPA's best interest.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

Christopher S. Tenorio
Executive Director

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL LICENSING
P.O. Box 502078, Bldg., 1242 Pohnpei Court
Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel No: (670) 664-4809 Fax: (670) 664-4814
Email: cnmi@cnmibpl-hcplb.net • Website: cnmibpl-hcplb.net

Pursuant to P. L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph Torres and Lt. Governor Victor Hocog, through the Board of Professional Licensing (BPL) are hereby giving notice that it will hold its board meeting on **March 20, 2018 at 9 a.m.** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the Board's office at Bldg. #1242, Pohnpei Ct., Capitol Hill, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. Meeting Call to Order
II. Determination of Quorum
III. Review and Adoption of Agenda
IV. Review and Adoption of Minutes (06/23/17)
V. Public Comments
VI. Chairman's Report
  A. Welcoming of former Board Member, Gregorio Q. Castro
VII. Director's Report
  A. Financial Report
  B. 2018 Western Zone Interim Meeting – Honolulu, HI, April 5-7, 2018
  C. Letter from Fred A. Smith, P.E. – Application for Geoffrey G. Melchor
VIII. Investigator's Report
IX. Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
  A. Governor's Office
  B. Legislature
X. Old Business
  A. Draft Proposed Amendments to the Regulations for Engineers, Architects, Land Surveyors and Landscape Architects (For Board review & discussion)
XI. New Business
XII. Applications for Board's Review
XIII. Miscellaneous Business
XIV. Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with counsel with pending or anticipated legal matters.
  For Board Discussion:
  - 2018-001 (Architectural Applicant)
  - 2018-002 (COA Applicant)
  - 2018-003 (Civil Engineer Applicant)
  - 2018-004 (Electrical Engineer Applicant)
  - 2018-005 (COA Applicant)
XV. Announcements
  A. Next Meeting Date
  B. Adjournment of Meeting

Members from the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library presented information on books focused on health and wellness to participants at the recent NMC Health Fair.
NMC

NMC
NMC Nursing student demonstrated cardio-pulmonary resuscitation to community members and participants at the 12th Annual Health Fair.

NMC
An NMC Nursing student and NMC's Area Health Education Center program coordinator Quenna Sablan pose for a photo at the 12th Annual NMC Health Fair.

Business

Toys R Us is planning to liquidate its US operations

NEW YORK (AP)—Toys R Us is headed toward shuttering its U.S. operations, jeopardizing the jobs of some 30,000 employees while spelling the end for a chain known to generations of children and parents for its sprawling stores and Geoffrey the giraffe mascot.

The closing of the company's 740 U.S. stores over the coming months will finalize the downfall of the chain that succumbed to heavy debt and relentless trends that undercut its business, from online shopping to mobile games.

CEO David Brandon told employees Wednesday the company's plan is to liquidate all of its U.S. stores, according to an audio recording of the meeting obtained by The Associated Press.

Brandon said Toys R Us will try to bundle its Canadian business, with about 200 stores, and find a buyer. The company's U.S. online store would still be running for the next couple of weeks in case there's a buyer for it.

It's likely to also liquidate its businesses in Australia, France, Poland, Portugal and Spain, according to the recording. It's already shuttering its business in the United Kingdom. That would leave it with stores in Canada, central Europe and Japan, where it could find buyers for those assets.

Toys R Us had about 60,000 full-time and part-time employees worldwide last year.

Brandon said on the recording that the company would be filing liquidation papers and there would be a bankruptcy court hearing Thursday.

AP

In this Sept. 19, 2017, file photo, shoppers walk into a Toys R Us store, in San Antonio. Toys R Us says it will be closing some U.S. stores and converting others to cobranded locations as it continues to deal with its financial restructuring following its bankruptcy filing.

"We worked as hard and as long as we could to turn over every rock," Brandon told employees. He put much of the blame on its woes on the media, saying negative stories about the company's prospects scared customers and vendors.

The Wayne, New Jersey-based company declined to comment.

The chain filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection last fall, saddled with $5 billion in debt that hurt its attempts to compete as shoppers moved to Amazon and huge chains like Walmart.

It pledged then to stay open, but Brandon told employees that it had a "devastating" sales performance during the critical holiday season as nervous customers and vendors shied away. That made its lenders more skittish about investing in the company. In January, it announced plans to close about 180 stores over the next couple of months, leaving it with a little more than 700 stores.

The company's troubles have affected toy makers Mattel and Hasbro, which are big suppliers to the chain. But the likely liquidation will have a bigger impact on smaller toy makers, who rely more on the chain for sales. However, many have been trying to diversify in recent months as they worried about the chain's survival.

Toys R Us was also hurt by the shift to mobile devices taking up more play time. But steep sales declines over the holidays and thereafter were the deciding factor, said Jim Silver, who is editor-in-chief of toy review site TTPM.com.

The company didn't do enough to emphasize that it was reorganizing but not going out of business, Silver said. That misperception led customers to its stores because they didn't think they would be able to return gifts.

Now, the $11 billion in sales still happening at Toys R Us each year will disperse to other retailers like Amazon and discounters, analysts say. Other chains, seeing that Toys R Us was vulnerable, got more aggressive. J.C. Penney opened toy sections last fall in all 875 stores. Target and Walmart have been expanding their toy selections. Even Party City is building up its toy offerings.

Senate passes bill easing Dodd-Frank rules for banks

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Senate passed bipartisan legislation Wednesday designed to ease bank rules that were enacted to prevent a relapse of the 2008 financial crisis that caused millions of Americans to lose their jobs and homes.

The Senate voted 67-31 for a bill from Republican Senator Mike Crapo of Idaho that would dial back portions of the law known as Dodd-Frank.

The legislation would increase the threshold at which banks are considered so big and plugged into the financial grid that if one were to fail it would cause major havoc. Those banks are subject to stricter capital and planning requirements. Lawmakers are intent on loosening the restraints on them in hopes that it will boost lending and the economy.

President Donald Trump signaled that he'll sign the bill once it gets through Congress. Dismantling Dodd-Frank was one of his campaign pledges.

"The bill provides much-needed relief from the Dodd-Frank Act for thousands of community banks and credit unions, and will spur lending and economic growth without creating risks to the financial system," the White House said in a statement after the vote.

Republicans unanimously supported the bill, while Democrats splintered into two camps. One included several senators from rural states who worked out the compromise with Crapo. The other, led by Sens. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Sherrod Brown of Ohio, said the bill catered too much to the banks that contributed to the financial crisis and would increase the likelihood of future taxpayer bailouts.

"Big banks and their lobbyists are about to score a touchdown at the expense of hard-working families across the country," Brown said shortly before the vote.

The bill makes a fivefold increase, to $250 billion, in the level of assets at which banks are deemed to pose a potential threat if they failed. The change would ease regulations and oversight on more than two dozen financial companies, including BB&T Corp., SunTrust Banks, Fifth Third Bancorp and American Express.

Northern Marianas College
Procurement & Property Management Office
P.O. Box 501250 CK, Saipan, MP 96950 U.S.A.
Tel: (670) 237-6824 ext. 23/22 Fax: (670) 235-7601
E-mail: ppmo@marianas.edu

INVITATION FOR BIDS
NMC IFB 18-005

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF NEW DISTANCE LEARNING NETWORK AND TELEMEDICINE EQUIPMENT

Northern Marianas College is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the procurement and delivery of SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF NEW DISTANCE LEARNING NETWORK AND TELEMEDICINE EQUIPMENT.

Specifications and Scope of Work packages may be picked up at the **NMC Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, commencing FRIDAY, MARCH 02, 2018 between the hours of 9:00-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-4:00 p.m.**

For Bidder located outside of the CNMI may request a copy of the IFB via fax (670) 235-7601 or email to Anita Camacho (anita.camacho@marianas.edu).

Bid Packages are due no later than 10:00 a.m., APRIL 02, 2018, at Northern Marianas College, As Terlaje Campus, Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, Saipan, MP 96950. You may request a copy of the NMC IFB 18-005 packet via fax (670) 235-7601 or e-mail to Anita Camacho (anita.camacho@marianas.edu).

Paid for in part by Federal Funds through the USDA Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Grant Program.

In accordance with Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, Local Preference is not available to local businesses for this procurement.

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. The NMC reserves the right to reject any and/or all bid offers for any reason and waive any defect in said bids, or cancel in part or its entirety this IFB, if it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College. All costs incurred by the proposer to prepare a response to this solicitation and subsequent inquiries shall be borne by the proposer. All submittals shall become the property of NMC.

/s/ Anita Camacho
Procurement & Property Manager

A Land Grant Institution accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges and by The Senior Commission for Colleges and Universities of the Western Association for Schools and Colleges

Northern Marianas College
Procurement & Property Management Office
P.O. Box 501250 CK, Saipan, MP 96950 U.S.A.
Tel: (670) 237-6824 ext. 23/22 Fax: (670) 235-7601
E-mail: ppmo@marianas.edu

INVITATION FOR BIDS
NMC IFB 18-006

PARKING LOT DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Northern Marianas College (The College) is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the procurement of Parking Lot Drainage Improvement Project for the As Terlaje, Saipan Campus.

Specifications and Scope of Work packages may be picked up at the **NMC Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, commencing Monday, March 12, 2018, between the hours of 8:30-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-4:00 p.m.**

Bid Submissions are due no later than 10:00 a.m., April 13, 2018, at Northern Marianas College, As Terlaje Campus, Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, Saipan, MP 96950. In accordance with Public Laws 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, Local Preference is available to local businesses for this procurement.

For Bidders located outside of the CNMI: May request a copy of the IFB via fax (670) 235-7601 or email to Anita Camacho (anita.camacho@marianas.edu).

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. The College reserves the right to reject any and/or all bids for any reason and waive any defect in said bids, or cancel in part or its entirety this IFB, if it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College.

All costs incurred by the proposer to prepare a response to this solicitation and subsequent inquiries shall be borne by the proposer. All submittals shall become the property of NMC.

/s/ Anita Camacho
NMC Procurement & Property Manager

A Land Grant Institution accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges and by The Senior Commission for Colleges and Universities of the Western Association for Schools and Colleges

Northern Marianas College
Procurement & Property Management Office
P.O. Box 501250 CK, Saipan, MP 96950 U.S.A.
Tel: (670) 237-6824 ext. 23/22 Fax: (670) 235-7601
E-mail: ppmo@marianas.edu

INVITATION FOR BIDS
NMC IFB 18-007

Construction of an Agricultural Equipment Facility for the NMC-CREES Research Station, Tinian

Northern Marianas College is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the construction of a "Agricultural Equipment Facility" for CREES Station, Tinian.

Specifications and Scope of Work packages may be picked up at the **NMC Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, commencing FRIDAY, March 2nd, 2018 between the hours of 9:00-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-4:00 p.m.**

For Bidder located outside of the CNMI may request a copy of the IFB via fax (670) 235-7601 or email to Anita Camacho (anita.camacho@marianas.edu).

Bid Packages are due no later than 10:00 a.m., March 22, 2018, at Northern Marianas College, As Terlaje Campus, Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, Saipan, MP 96950. You may request a copy of the NMC IFB 18-007 packet via fax (670) 235-7601 or e-mail to Anita Camacho (anita.camacho@marianas.edu).

Paid for by 100% Federal Funds through the USDA-NIFA authorized under the Hatch Act, as amended August 11, 1955, award # 2017-31100 (Regular).

In accordance with Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, Local Preference is not available to local businesses for this procurement.

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. The NMC reserves the right to reject any and/or all bid offers for any reason and waive any defect in said bids, or cancel in part or its entirety this IFB, if it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College. All costs incurred by the proposer to prepare a response to this solicitation and subsequent inquiries shall be borne by the proposer. All submittals shall become the property of NMC.

/s/ Anita Camacho
Procurement & Property Manager

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Nation

Students around US stage huge walkout against gun violence

By COLLIN BINKLEY
ASSOCIATED PRESS

AP
Students chant during a walk out at the Las Vegas Academy of the Arts, Wednesday, March 14, 2018, in Las Vegas.

They bowed their heads in honor of the dead. They carried signs with messages like "Never again" and "Am I next?" They railed against the National Rifle Association and the politicians who support it.

And over and over, they repeated the message: Enough is enough.

In a wave of protests one historian called the largest of its kind in American history, tens of thousands of students walked out of their classrooms Wednesday to demand action on gun violence and school safety.

The demonstrations extended from Maine to Hawaii as students joined the youth-led surge of activism set off by the Feb. 14 massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

"We're sick of it," said Maxwell Nardi, a senior at Douglas S. Freeman High School in Henrico, Virginia, just outside Richmond. "We're going to keep fighting, and we're not going to stop until Congress finally makes resolute changes."

Students around the nation left class at 10 a.m. local time for at least 17 minutes—one minute for each of the dead in the Florida shooting. Some led marches or rallied on football fields, while others gathered in school gyms or took a knee in the hallway.

At some schools, hundreds of students poured out. At others, just one or two walked out in defiance of administrators.

They lamented that too many young people have died and that they're tired of going to school afraid they will be killed.

"Enough is enough. People are done with being shot," said Iris Fosse-Ober, 18, a senior at Washburn High School in Minneapolis.

Some issued specific demands for lawmakers, including mandatory background checks for all gun sales and a ban on assault weapons like the one used in the Florida bloodbath.

While administrators and teachers at some schools applauded students for taking a stand—and some joined them—others threatened punishment for missing class.

As the demonstrations unfolded, the NRA responded by posting a photo on Twitter of a black rifle emblazoned with an American flag. The caption: "I'll control my own guns, thank you."

The protests took place at schools from the elementary level through college, including some that have witnessed their own mass shootings: About 300 students gathered on a soccer field at Colorado's Columbine High, while students who survived the Sandy Hook Elementary School attack in 2012 marched out of Newtown High School in Connecticut.

In the nation's capital, more than 2,000 high-school age protesters observed 17 minutes of silence while sitting on the ground with their backs turned to the White House. President Donald Trump was out of town.

The students carried signs with messages such as "Our Blood/Your Hands" and "Never Again" and chanted slogans against the NRA.

In New York City, they chanted, "Enough is enough!" In Salt Lake City, the signs read, "Protect kids not guns," ''Fear has no place in school" and "Am I next?"

At Eagle Rock High in Los Angeles, teenagers took a moment of silence as they gathered around a circle of 17 chairs labeled with the names of the Florida victims.

Stoneman Douglas High senior David Hogg, who has emerged as one of the leading student activists, livestreamed the walkout at the tragedy-stricken school on his YouTube channel. He said students couldn't be expected to stay in class while there was work to do to prevent gun violence.

"Every one of these individuals could have died that day. I could have died that day," he said.

In joining the protests, the students followed the example set by many of the survivors of the Florida shooting, who have become gun-control activists, leading rallies, lobbying legislators and giving TV interviews. Their efforts helped spur passage last week of a Florida law curbing access to assault rifles by young people.

Mother: Class kept going after teacher fired gun, injuring 3

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—A teacher at a Northern California high school accidentally fired his gun inside a classroom, causing minor injuries to three students, but kept teaching while the students sat there, the mother of one of the students said Wednesday.

Dennis Alexander, a reserve police officer, was pointing the gun at the ceiling Tuesday to make sure it was not loaded when it discharged inside his classroom at Seaside High School in the coastal community of Seaside, police said.

Police said no one sustained serious injuries.

Alexander was not authorized to have a gun on campus, Monterey Peninsula Unified School District spokeswoman Marci McFadden said.

District policy says only school resource officers—active law enforcement personnel employed as armed security at schools—can carry guns on campuses.

Authorities were investigating why Alexander had the gun and if officials were aware that he intended to bring it to school, McFadden said.

Fermin Gonzales, 17, one of the injured students, told KTVU-TV that he saw blood on his shirt after the gun fired.

"Then I wiped my neck, kind of, and a bullet fragment comes off my neck," he said.

The teen's mother, Crystal Gonzales, told The Associated Press that no officials contacted parents to let them know what happened and that she was shocked to learn about the mishap several hours later.

"I'm still really upset no one called a nurse or a paramedic to come check on the students," Gonzales said. "They just sat there until the bell rang."

The accidental shooting came amid a national debate over whether to arm teachers in the aftermath of a mass school shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, that killed 17 students and staff members.

On Wednesday, thousands of high school students walked out of classrooms across the nation to protest gun violence in schools.

A law that took effect in California on Jan. 1 halted the ability of school districts to allow non-security employees to carry guns on campus.

Alexander was teaching a gun safety lesson in an administration of justice class and was about to show the students how to disarm someone when the gun fired, Gonzales said.

Gonzales said the incident happened Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. and that she did not hear about it until her son called her hours later when the class ended and went to a relative's home.

As the boy's parents rushed him to a hospital for X-rays, she said the school's principal called her cellphone to apologize.

The teen is fine, though he's still shaken up and stayed home Wednesday, his mother said.

Gonzales said police didn't arrive at the school to investigate until three hours later and the family filed a police report.

Florida school shooting suspect remains silent in court

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP)—While students across the nation walked out of school to protest gun violence, the 19-year-old accused of killing 17 people and wounding more in the Florida school shooting sat in court silently, his head bowed.«

Nikolas Cruz, shackled and wearing a red jail jumpsuit, sat motionless in the jury box and said nothing during a brief hearing Wednesday. Because he refused to announce his plea, Circuit Judge Elizabeth Scherer entered a not guilty plea on his behalf on each of the 34 counts he faces—mainly to keep the legal process moving.

His attorney, Assistant Public Defender Melisa McNeill, reiterated that Cruz would plead guilty if prosecutors waived the death penalty, which they refused to do. If he pleaded guilty, McNeill said Cruz would accept a sentence of 34 life terms behind bars. It's still possible a plea deal could be reached.

At least 20 green-clad deputies from the Broward Sheriff's Office formed a tight ring of security around the courtroom. In the audience were several parents of shooting victims as well as Cruz's younger brother, Zachary.

Cruz is accused of carrying out the massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida that also wounded 17 people in a case that has reignited a national debate about gun control and school safety. It also prompted Wednesday's nationwide walkout of thousands of students who showed solidarity with the Parkland students a month after the shooting.

While Cruz sat in the courtroom, more details of the shooting emerged as the Coral Springs Police Department released recordings of 911 calls and police radio traffic.

In the recordings, students and dispatchers were uncertain about the shooter's location and how to hide from him.

Some were frightened the gunman would return to their location when asked if they could perform CPR on the wounded.

"Please, please, please, there are people here. They are bleeding. They are all going to die," a teenage girl calling from classroom 1215 said through tears and heavy breathing. "There's a lot of people around us that are injured, people that are injured, people that are bleeding. He is upstairs now."

Moments later, the girl starts screaming "They are coming in, oh no!" before discovering it was police officers who were entering the room.

A teacher from room 1216 also called for help and told the 911 operator that a student had been hit in the chest, and wasn't breathing.

"He's twitching. There's blood all over," she said.

At one point, the operator warned that the shooter was still in the hallway, advising the teacher to keep the students still. "Stay down, he's by your room, OK. Everyone be quiet."

The police radio recordings showed that the Coral Springs police officers were the first to enter the school building after confirming that Broward County Sheriff's Office deputies had not gone in.

Asia

Yes, canned soup may be fueling N. Korea's air force

PYONGYANG, North Korea (AP)—Is North Korea's air force selling canned soup and taxi rides to upgrade its runways and airstrips?

Amid the toughest sanctions ever against the North and its nuclear weapons program, there are some compelling reasons to believe the answer may well be yes. The story of how—and why—offers some insight into how North Korea's economy functions under Kim Jong Un.

There's a fine line between North Korea's military and its private sector. To augment the already huge share of the country's limited national resources earmarked for defense, North Korean military units control everything from restaurants to farms to the flagship airline.

Air Koryo is far more than just an airline.

Over the past several years, it has also become one of the country's most recognizable consumer brands.

With only a dozen or so active-use aircraft operating on limited routes to China and the Russian Far East, it's hard to imagine it's ever been much of a money-maker for Pyongyang in the conventional, ticket-sales sort of way. But it is a symbol of national prestige and serves as a key lifeline to the outside world, transporting people and loads and loads of precious—and often not-very-closely-scrutinized - cargo.

Air Koryo runs at least one gas station and car wash in Pyongyang, has its own fleet of taxis and operates several retail shops, including a boutique at the airport. At the relatively upscale Potonggang Department Store in central Pyongyang, whole aisles are devoted to Air Koryo brand products, from crates of liquor to row after row of Coke-like sodas and a half dozen varieties of canned goods, including pheasant soup and canned peaches.

AP

This Jan. 31, 2018, photo shows North Korea's flagship airline, Air Koryo brand products, from energy drinks to alcohol, in Pyongyang, North Korea.

The airline's moves mirror broader shifts in the North Korean economy, which is still socialist and technically centrally controlled, but under Kim has shifted rapidly toward capitalist-style entrepreneurialism.

At the grassroots level, street vendors and small, bazaar-style markets are common. Higher up, state-run enterprises are adapting to become more productive and profitable - quite possibly because the regime, pinched by sanctions and shrinking trade possibilities, can't afford to prop them up anymore.

It's not just Air Koryo: Naegohyang, a major producer of cigarettes including the luxury "7.27" brand reportedly favored by Kim himself, has begun pushing its own line of sporting goods. They're sold alongside Nike, Adidas and other pricey imports at its flagship stores near Pyongyang's diplomatic quarter and in the exclusive Scientists' Street district, a neighborhood built to reward the country's scientists and technicians.

Air Koryo got a big boost with Kim's decision to completely overhaul the Pyongyang Sunan International Airport, which opened a shiny new terminal in 2015. The next year, Air Koryo started its taxi service. The Air Koryo soft drink line was launched in 2016. A gas station and car wash followed in 2017.

It's impossible to say how profitable those initiatives have been. But the swelling variety of the goods and their ready availability in the capital and elsewhere, is undeniable.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Duterte withdrawing Philippines from Int'l Criminal Court

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—President Rodrigo Duterte announced Wednesday that the Philippines is withdrawing its ratification of a treaty that created the International Criminal Court, where he is facing a possible complaint over thousands of suspects killed in his anti-drug crackdown. Critics expressed shock at Duterte's decision, saying he was trying to escape accountability and fearing it could foster an even worse human rights situation in the country. Others called the move a foreign policy blunder that could embolden China to scoff at Manila's victory in an international arbitration case against Beijing over contested territories. An ICC prosecutor announced last month that she was opening a preliminary examination into possible crimes against humanity over alleged extrajudicial killings in Duterte's drug crackdown, angering the president. Duterte said Wednesday that the court cannot have jurisdiction over him because the Philippine Senate's ratification in 2011 of the Rome Statute that established the court was never publicized as required by law. He called the failure to make the ratification public a "glaring and fatal error."

Bomb kills 9, wounds 27 in eastern Pakistan

LAHORE, Pakistan (AP)—A suspected suicide bombing near a police checkpoint killed five police and four bystanders and wounded 27 others on Wednesday near the city of Lahore in eastern Pakistan, police said. Haider Ashraf, Lahore police chief, said that evidence collected from the scene suggested it was a suicide attack. However, investigators and explosives experts were working to ascertain whether the bomb was planted near the checkpoint. He said he believes the police were targeted. The checkpoint is located near a religious group's main congregation place in Raiwind near Lahore, the capital of Punjab province. Ashraf said evidence at the scene suggested a motorcycle was used. Police said the blast took place after evening prayers and most members of the religious group had exited into the street, some making purchases nearby.

World

OVER SPY POISONING

Britain boots 23 Russian diplomats

LONDON (AP)—Relations between Britain and Russia plunged Wednesday to a chilly level not seen since the Cold War as Prime Minister Theresa May expelled 23 diplomats, severed high-level contacts and vowed both open and covert action against Kremlin meddling after the poisoning of a former spy.

Russia said it would respond soon to what it called Britain's "crude" and "hostile" actions.

While May pledged to disrupt Russian espionage and "hostile state activity," she gave few details about how hard Britain would hit Russian politicians and oligarchs where it really hurts—in their wallets.

"Expelling diplomats is a kind of a standard response," said Natasha Kuhrt, a Russia expert at King's College London. "I'm not sure it's going to make Moscow stand up and think."

May told the House of Commons that 23 Russians diplomats who have been identified as undeclared intelligence officers have a week to leave Britain.

"This will be the single biggest expulsion for over 30 years," May said, adding that it would "fundamentally degrade Russian intelligence capability in the U.K. for years to come."

May spoke after Moscow ignored a midnight deadline to explain how the nerve agent Novichok, developed by the Soviet Union, was used against Sergei Skripal, an ex-Russian agent convicted of spying for Britain, and his daughter Yulia. They remain in critical condition in a hospital in Salisbury, southwestern England, after being found unconscious March 4.

May said "there is no alternative conclusion other than that the Russian state was culpable for the attempted murder of Mr. Skripal and his daughter."

She announced a range of economic and diplomatic measures, including the suspension of high-level contacts with Russia. An invitation for Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to visit Britain has been canceled, and British ministers and royals won't attend the soccer World Cup in Russia this summer.

May also said Britain would clamp down on murky Russian money and strengthen its powers to impose sanctions on abusers of human rights, though she gave few details.

"We will freeze Russian state assets wherever we have the evidence that they may be used to threaten the life or property of U.K. nationals or residents," May said, promising to use all legal powers against criminals and corrupt elites, and to "increase checks on private flights, customs and freight."

"There is no place for these people—or their money—in our country," she said.

May said some of the measures "cannot be shared publicly for reasons of national security."

The Russian Embassy in London said the expulsion of diplomats was "totally unacceptable, unjustified and shortsighted." Ambassador Alexander Yakovenko called Britain's actions were "a provocation."

Russia did not immediately announce retaliatory measures, but its Foreign Ministry said "our response will not be long in coming."

It said Britain's "hostile measures" were "an unprecedentedly crude provocation."

Britain called an emergency meeting of the U.N. Security Council in New York at which U.K. and Russian diplomats traded accusations, with Britain blaming the Russian state for the attack and Russia vehemently denying responsibility.

Turkish shelling on Kurdish Afrin intensifies, kills 7

BEIRUT (AP)—Turkish forces shelled the Kurdish-held northern Syrian town of Afrin on Wednesday killing at least seven people, Kurdish forces reported, as government shelling and airstrikes killed at least 20 civilians in the besieged eastern Ghouta enclave near the capital Damascus, activists said.

Shells slammed into the heart of Afrin at dusk at intervals just second apart, forcing residents to rush for cover, according to video published by the People's Protection Units, known as the YPG. The group is being targeted by Turkey as a threat to its national security.

A resident reported a worsening bread shortage as tens of thousands of civilians have flocked to the town seeking relief from the advancing forces, shelling, and airstrikes. Azad Mohamed said he waited in line at Afrin's only bakery for eight hours for a few loaves of bread. He said some residents were being turned away without any.

Afrin is already suffering from water and power shortages after Turkish forces cut supplies from the countryside, according to the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. Turkey has bombed several bakeries since launching its offensive on Jan. 20, according to the Observatory.

Thousands of residents had already fled Afrin as the Turkish troops approached, heading toward nearby areas controlled by the Syrian government, but hundreds of thousands more remain trapped in the town as Turkish forces and supporting Syrian opposition fighters move to completely encircle it.

Turkish airstrikes killed at least eight pro-government militiamen, deployed to help the YPG, south of Afrin, according to the Kurdish military group.

A Facebook page of the Nubl and Zahraa villages posted photographs of the eight killed fighters, who were from the villages.

There was no comment from the Turkish or Syrian government.

Turkey had warned the Syrian government against coming to the aid of the Kurdish militia, which Ankara considers "terrorists" and aligned with Kurdish insurgents inside Turkey.

Turkey launched its military offensive into the border region to drive out Syrian Kurdish forces that it considers to be "terrorists" and an extension of Kurdish rebels fighting inside Turkey.

Meanwhile, government shelling and airstrikes killed at least 20 civilians in the besieged eastern Ghouta enclave near the capital, Damascus, activists reported.

A doctor in the town of Hamouria, inside the besieged zone, said his hospital was overwhelmed with casualties and that for four hours ambulances could not move the wounded for care. He spoke on condition of anonymity out of fear for his own safety. At least 10 civilians were killed in Hamouria.

Off The Wall

OFFBEAT BRIEFS

NASA will fly you to the sun—or at least your name

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP)—NASA will fly you to the sun—or at least your name. Now until April 27, NASA is accepting online submissions for this hottest ticket in town. The names will be sent on the Parker Solar Probe all the way to the sun. Once launched this summer from Cape Canaveral, Florida, the probe will eventually come within 4 million miles of our star, closer than any other spacecraft. Temperatures will reach 2,500 degrees Fahrenheit (1,300 degrees Celsius), as the spacecraft zips in and out of this atmospheric hot zone. Until now, the materials for such a grueling journey were unavailable. Actor William Shatner, who portrayed Capt. James Kirk in the old "Star Trek" TV series, is NASA's pitchman for the send-your-name-to-the-sun campaign.

Police say impaired bride crashes on her way to her wedding

MARANA, Ariz. (AP)—Police say a bride in southern Arizona was arrested on suspicion of impaired driving after she was involved in a car crash on the way to her wedding. Amber Young was wearing an open-back dress when she was handcuffed and put into a police cruiser Monday in Marana, 30 miles north of Tucson. Police spokesman Sgt. Chriswell Scott says one person suffered minor injuries in the crash. It is not known whether Young has an attorney who can comment on her behalf. Scott tweeted, "Don't drive impaired, till death do we part doesn't need any help." Young was taken to a police substation to have her blood drawn and released without going to jail. It's unknown whether Young made it to her wedding.

Mexico seizes mezcal bottles with snakes, reptiles inside

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Forget the worm at the bottom of your bottle of mescal. Mexican environmental inspectors have found whole boas and iguanas stuffed into bottles of mezcal at a market in the southern state of Oaxaca. The wide-mouth bottles were filled with "artisanal, wild agave" mezcal that was apparently meant to be drunk, albeit probably on a bet. The federal office for environmental protection said Tuesday it seized 15 bottles with species including a blood snake, ridge head snake, yellowbelly snake and a whip snake. For decades, college students have been downing the maguey worm found at the bottom of some bottles of mescal. The worms were originally added either for taste or to prove the drink's authenticity. The sale of wildlife—even pickled—is strictly regulated in Mexico.

Snow joke: Weatherman named Meteorologist runs for office

LANCASTER, Pa. (AP)—A former TV weatherman who legally changed his name to Meteorologist Drew Anderson says there's a 100 percent chance he'll run for Congress in Pennsylvania under the new moniker. LNP reports Anderson is collecting signatures to get on the Republican primary ballot for a run against U.S. Rep. Lloyd Smucker. Anderson says he's looking for a climate change in Washington. LNP says Anderson lives in West Chester but may move to Lancaster if he wins. It says the weatherman changed his name from Drew Anderson last year and left his job at WPMT-TV Fox 43 in York two weeks ago. Anderson also has worked for NBC affiliate WGAL-TV in Lancaster and as a science teacher. LNP says locksmith Bill Neff also is seeking to run against Smucker in the primary.

Sno-Cat resembling 'Dukes of Hazzard' car stolen in Colorado

MINTURN, Colo. (AP) — Authorities in Colorado are looking for a man suspected of stealing a Sno-Cat fitted out to look like the "General Lee," the famous car featured in the classic television series "The Dukes of Hazzard." Co-owner John Brandenburg says the large, treaded snow vehicle was on a trailer outside a Minturn restaurant when someone hitched it up and drove away sometime Sunday. He immediately took to social media and received several responses from people who said they saw a pickup hauling it west on Interstate 70. Brandenburg says the thief covered the Sno-Cat in tarps, but the decal on the side door was still visible. KCNC-TV in Denver reports the Sno-Cat was tracked to a garage in the Grand Junction area. A SWAT team was deployed, but the suspect managed to get away.

Aging kangaroo to get cryotherapy treatment for arthritis

NEW YORK (AP)—An aging kangaroo who calls the Bronx Zoo home is receiving cryotherapy treatment for arthritis. The treatment is a high-tech alternative to ice baths that humans have used for years. Zoo director Jim Breheny tells the Daily News that the nearly 15-year-old marsupial named Dave is getting up there and his stiff joints are aching. Breheny says the treatment might sound exotic but that it's really just one course of healing the 200 medical experts at the zoo in New York City utilize to treat some 7,000 different species. Dave's saga with localized cryotherapy treatment will be documented by Animal Planet's latest season of "The Zoo." Cryotherapy has become commercially popular in recent years. Some Manhattan facilities charge humans as much as $90 for a three-minute session.

WORLD RECORD AP

A blimp tows skiers on Lake Elsinore, Calif., on Tuesday, March 13, 2018. The blimp towed skier Kari McCollum for 6.9 miles for a new record, according to Philip Robertson, an adjudicator with Guinness World Records.

Science & Technology

YouTube: Conspiracy videos out

NEW YORK (AP)—YouTube says it's cracking down on conspiracy videos, though it's scant on the details.

Conspiracy videos abound on YouTube, whether it's about the Earth being flat or school shootings being staged. YouTube, its parent Google, Facebook and Twitter are all facing challenges with the spread of misinformation, propaganda and fake news.

YouTube CEO Susan Wojcicki said at a conference Tuesday that the company will include links to the online encyclopedia Wikipedia to try to debunk videos espousing conspiracy theories.

But Wikipedia itself has had its share of credibility issues, as the service lets anyone edit its content, whether that person is a pedigreed expert or an online troll. Though Wikipedia has tried to address that - in part by restricting edits on pages - it isn't immune from hoaxes and its own conspiracy theories.

In a statement Wednesday, YouTube said the links will include other "third-party sources" besides Wikipedia, though YouTube isn't identifying any. The organization that runs Wikipedia said Wednesday that it had no formal partnership with YouTube, but welcomed the use of Wikipedia resources.

YouTube said the move is part of a broader initiative to crack down on misinformation, though it did not give details on what else is in the works.

While conspiracy videos are nothing new on YouTube, the topic received renewed attention in recent weeks as videos falsely claimed that students speaking out about the Feb. 14 which killed 17 people, were "crisis actors" who were not really there when it happened. One such conspiracy video was the top trending video on YouTube until the company removed it—although many similar videos remained up, illustrating the difficulty in instituting any sort of crackdown.

Conspiracy videos, to be sure, are not against YouTube›s policies. In the "crisis actor" case, the company said it removed the video because it violated its rules against harassment. As such, YouTube is unlikely to ban misinformation entirely. Instead, it may adopt Facebook's tactic of de-emphasizing such content and making it less likely to be seen. As it stands, critics say YouTube is doing the opposite.

TECH Q&A How to get rid of pop-up ads on the iPhone and iPad

By STEVE ALEXANDER
Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

Steve Alexander covers technology for the Minneapolis Star Tribune. Readers may write to him at Tech Q&A, 425 Portland Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn. 55488-0002; email: steve.j.alexander@gmail.com. Please include a full name, city and phone number.

Q: How can we stop the annoying Amazon lock screen advertisements that are plaguing our iPhone and iPad Safari browsers?

A: You aren't seeing the Amazon lock screen ads. Those appeared only on the lock screen (the screen you see before typing in a password) of some non-Apple phones that Amazon sold.

The ads you are seeing in your iPhone and iPad Safari browsers are caused by unwanted pop-up software that comes from many sources, some legitimate and some not. Some of these ads try to sell you something, while others—typically those that deliver warnings or offer prizes—are "phishing" scams that try to trick you into disclosing personal information.

To avoid getting these pop-ups, make sure your Apple iOS operating system is up to date (some updates enhance security.) Go to Settings, click General and then click "software update."

You should also make sure that your Safari browser is set to enable the features "block pop-ups" and "fraudulent website warning." To turn them on, go to Settings and click Safari. If the pop-ups persist, go to Settings, then Safari, and click "clear history and website data."

Q: I read your article on ransomware, the malicious software that can encrypt the files on a PC and keep them locked unless you pay to free them (see tinyurl.com/ybq6zm22).

What happens if, as you suggest, I unplug my external backup device to protect it from ransomware, then plug it back into the PC after a ransomware attack so that I can restore my files? Would the backup device also become encrypted by the ransomware?

A: It's possible. If you have a ransomware attack, you should use security software to remove the ransomware files from your PC before plugging in your external backup device.

If the PC won't let you install anything, force it to restart in Safe Mode (see tinyurl.com/hahn2u4). Then download and run the free version of Malwarebytes (tinyurl.com/jsdacdk) and the 30-day free trial version of HitmanPro (tinyurl.com/jfx-atff) to clean your PC's hard disk. Then use Windows System Restore (see tinyurl.com/kxanto5) to return your PC's settings to the way they were on a calendar date before the ransomware attack. After that, it will be safe to reconnect your backup device.

Q: Following the installation of a "critical update" on my Windows 7 PC, I'm unable to access my files. When I log into the PC, I get a message that says I'm a "temporary user." Using System Restore didn't help. What can I do?

A: The Windows 7 update has corrupted, or scrambled, the "user profile" that stores your login information. As a result, you will need to create a new user profile that will give you access to everything on the PC. First, log in as an "administrator" (see tinyurl.com/y7bce-juq and go to "cannot log in/no other user account available.) Then set up a new user profile (see tinyurl.com/yctk6dc3 and follow the instructions for "my computer is on a domain.")

Life & Style

‘Homer can help you’: War veterans use ancient epics to cope

BURLINGTON, Vt. (AP)—The trials of Odysseus are really not that different from the struggles of those learning to readjust after wars of today, modern veterans are finding.

A small group of military veterans has been meeting weekly in a classroom at the University of Vermont to discuss “The Iliad” and “The Odyssey” for college credit—and to give meaning to their own experiences, equating the close-order discipline of men who fought with spears, swords and shields to that of men and women who do battle these days with laser-guided munitions.

Homer isn’t just for student veterans. Discussion groups are also being offered at veterans centers in New Hampshire and Massachusetts. The Maine Humanities Council has sponsored sessions for veterans incarcerated at Maine’s Kennebec County jail, as well as for other veterans.

For many in the UVM class, Homer’s 2,800-year-old verses seem all too familiar: the siege of Troy, the difficult quest of Odysseus to return home after 10 years at war, his anguish at watching friends die, and his problems readjusting to civilian life.

AP
In this Feb. 12, 2018 photo, University of Vermont student veterans Thomas Moore, left, and Dan Wright, participate in a class studying Homer’s “The Iliad” and “The Odyssey” in Burlington, Vt.

Stephanie Wobby, 26, a former Army medic originally from Sacramento, California, is a combat veteran who served in both Iraq and Afghanistan and is one of two women in the UVM course; she has been to traditional post-traumatic stress therapy sessions, but said, “This is far more effective for me.”

“It still resonates, coming home from war, even if it was however many years ago,” said Wobby, a junior majoring in chemistry. “It’s the same.”

In a recent class, Dan Wright, 26, an Afghanistan veteran and UVM junior, wore a T-shirt bearing the slogan “Down with my Demons” while the group discussed “The Iliad.”

“It was talking about being scared to die and, like, when you are on the field, don’t think about it,” said Wright, 26, of Halifax, Vermont. He said he was involved in near-daily firefights during a nine-month combat tour in Afghanistan in 2012.

Enrollment in the class taught by John Franklin, an associate professor of classics, is limited to veterans; the current class includes veterans from wars in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan. There are no papers or tests, and the grade is based entirely on class participation and an understanding of the material.

The people who work with the veterans at UVM felt it was a tragedy when they heard last week that a former Army rifleman expelled from a program to treat veterans with PTSD took three women hostage in California and fatally shot them. With Homer they are working to avoid the idea of the damaged veteran, said David Carlson, the coordinator of student veterans’ services at UVM and a Marine veteran of Iraq in 2005 and 2006 who sits in on the classes.

NBC News says it wants to start streaming service

NEW YORK (AP)—NBC News is exploring ways to start a streaming service for its news division.

“We want to do this and I think we’ve got to open that door,” NBC News Chairman Andrew Lack said on Wednesday.

The service would operate alongside NBC’s cable channel, MSNBC, which benefits from the interest in politics and frequently is the second most popular cable channel in prime time after Fox News Channel.

Television networks are exploring different ways to deal with cord-cutters and young people more interested in following news on their devices. Lack wouldn’t reveal any details about how NBC is looking to do it beyond saying it’s on the drawing board.

CBS currently offers CBSN, a free 24-hour streaming service with its own programming lineup. The network has revealed few details about how many people actually watch it and Lack himself said he hadn’t seen it. Fox recently announced plans for its own subscription streaming service, Fox Nation, which will provide original opinion programming.

The CNNgo service, which streams the television feeds of CNN’s various network, is available to users who confirm they have cable or satellite subscriptions. ABC News provides multiple live streams through its website, generally a mix of raw feeds, produced segments and special events.

ESPN, among the networks most hurt by cord-cutting, is due to roll out a paid subscription service this spring.

Lack said NBC’s digital strategy in general concentrates on pushing out video, more so than its rivals. And digital programming done with partnerships, like the program “Stay Tuned,” is a strong training ground for young talent.

That doesn’t mean he isn’t excited about MSNBC’s prospects. The network has built a strong lead in prime-time in recent months, leading CNN to announce a schedule change Wednesday to start a new show behind Chris Cuomo.

“I don’t have a crystal ball anymore, but I like what I see in 2018, 2019 and 2020,” Lack said.

Harper Lee estate sues over ‘Mockingbird’ Broadway version

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP)—The estate of “To Kill a Mockingbird” author Harper Lee has filed suit over an upcoming Broadway adaptation of the novel, arguing that screenwriter Aaron Sorkin’s script wrongly alters Atticus Finch and other characters from the book.

The suit, which includes a copy of a contract signed by Lee and dated about eight months before her death in February 2016, contends Sorkin’s script violates the agreement by portraying Finch, the noble attorney who represents a black man wrongly accused of rape in “Mockingbird,” as someone else in the play.

Lee

Filed against the theater company of New York producer Scott Rudin, the complaint cites an interview with the online publication Vulture in which Sorkin was quoted as saying the small-town lawyer would evolve from a racist apologist at the start of the show to become “Atticus Finch by the end of the play.”

Such a change during a play could fit with the character evolution shown between the Pulitzer Prize-winning “Mockingbird” and Lee’s first draft of the novel, finally released in 2015 as “Go Set a Watchman.”

But the lawsuit contends the script would violate the contact by changing Finch and other characters and adding still more people who aren’t in the novel. It asks a judge to enforce a section of the agreement that states the play won’t “depart in any manner from the spirit of the Novel nor alter its characters.”

A firm that represents Rudin’s company, Rudinplay Inc., said Sorkin’s script “is a faithful adaptation of a singular novel which has been crafted well within the constraints of the signed agreement” between the producers and Lee.

The statement also took a jab at the “history of litigious behavior” of Lee’s estate, overseen by attorney Tonja Carter of Lee’s south Alabama hometown of Monroeville.

George Lucas breaks ground on LA’s Museum of Narrative Art

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Wielding a silver shovel instead of a lightsaber, “Star Wars” creator George Lucas joined a handful of elected officials Wednesday in breaking ground on a billion-dollar museum dedicated to the art of visual storytelling.

Construction of the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art, a dream of the 73-year-old writer-director for more than a decade, is expected to be completed by the end of 2021.

Trucks rumbled by the museum site near downtown Los Angeles as Lucas, dressed casually in a white- and blue-checkered shirt, jeans and tennis shoes, thanked more than 100 well-wishers. Among them was his collaborator and longtime friend, director Steven Spielberg.

“I think it’s important to have a museum that, as I was joking and saying, supports all the orphan arts that nobody else wants to see, but that everybody loves,” Lucas said, describing the project.

His museum’s mission, he added, will be to explain the myths, legends, stories and portraits of people that shape societies and bring them together as one. The art will range from paintings and digital works to comic strips and, yes, movies like “Star Wars.”

“To my feeling, popular art is an insight into a society and what they aspire to, what they really want, what they really are,” Lucas said before grabbing a shovel and joining several local officials in turning over some dirt.

At times, the groundbreaking resembled a movie premiere minus the red carpet, with television cameras and photographers capturing the moment. Lucas called on Spielberg to join him on the mound of dirt, directing his friend to give a thumbs-up to the cameras.

“It’s a great location,” Spielberg told him as they headed to a private reception. Lucas pointed out the blocks-long museum site that until recently was a parking lot behind the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum where the 1932 and 1984 Olympics took place.

It will be transformed into a multistory museum resembling Han Solo’s Millennium Falcon spacecraft that appears to hover over an area surrounded by 11 acres of green space. The museum itself will contain more than 100,000 square feet of gallery space, underground parking, a restaurant, movie theaters and other amenities. Numerous programs are being planned for children from surrounding schools.

Docs link Trump org lawyer to effort to silence porn star

WASHINGTON (AP)—New documents show a second lawyer with ties to President Donald Trump was involved in legal efforts to keep adult film star Stormy Daniels from talking about her alleged affair with Trump.

Attorney Jill A. Martin signed the documents, which were filed Feb. 22 as part of confidential arbitration proceedings. She's referenced in the filing as counsel for "EC LLC," though the address she lists is that of Trump's Los Angeles golf club.

EC appears to be a reference to a company formed by Trump's personal attorney, Michael Cohen, to facilitate a $130,000 payment to silence Daniels in the closing days of the 2016 presidential campaign. Cohen has acknowledged making the payment, but said he was not reimbursed and denied the campaign and the Trump Organization were involved in the transaction.

AP

In this Feb. 11, 2007, file photo, adult film actress Stormy Daniels arrives for the 49th Annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles.

Daniels' attorney, Michael Avenatti, confirmed the authenticity of the new documents to The Associated Press. The documents were first reported by CNN and the Wall Street Journal.

Avenatti said the documents show that "contrary to Mr. Cohen's representations, there is little to no difference between EC LLC and The Trump Organization/Donald Trump."

In a statement late Wednesday, the Trump Organization said Martin worked on the filing in her "individual capacity" and the company "has had no involvement in the matter."

The White House says Trump has denied the affair with Daniels, whose real name is Stephanie Clifford.

Earlier this month, Clifford filed a lawsuit seeking to invalidate her "hush agreement" because it was signed only by her and Cohen, but not Trump. She's also offered to return the money she was paid for agreeing not to discuss the alleged relationship.

Clifford alleges that she began an "intimate relationship" with Trump in 2006 and that it continued "well into the year 2007," according to the lawsuit. She said the relationship included encounters in Lake Tahoe, Nevada, and Beverly Hills, California.

After a lost record deal, Scotty McCreery rebounds on a song

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Two years ago, country singer Scotty McCreery found out he lost his record deal with Mercury/Interscope while shooting an episode for "American Idol," the show he won in 2011. He had come back to mentor new contestants on the show, which was then on Fox, but his own career was at a precipice.

"I was trying to put on a happy face while I was filming," the 24-year-old singer with the baritone voice said. "That was a rough week."

McCreery, who is from North Carolina, had started his career on a high at 18 by becoming the youngest male artist and first country artist to debut his first album on the Billboard 200. Although his albums sold well, McCreery leaned toward the more traditional side of the genre, when bro-country and party songs ruled the airwaves.

He managed to get some Top 10 radio hits with "See You Tonight" and "Feelin' It," but he also dealt with the bias that many talent-show competitors run up against in the music industry.

"I think we've had to work hard to establish ourselves away from 'American Idol,' to not just be the TV guy, but to be the country music artist that writes songs and tells stories and can sing songs," said McCreery, who adds that he's always been proud of his "Idol" beginning. He's even returned to the new season of "Idol," now on ABC, as a mentor.

But McCreery feared that after losing his record deal, he was losing the rights to the songs he had recorded while he was still signed. In particular, he wanted to get back a song called "Five More Minutes," which he wrote after losing his grandfather in 2015.

McCreery spent a year negotiating the purchase of those songs, still out touring as an independent artist and even releasing a memoir.

"In Nashville, in particular, if you get dealt a fatal blow like what we got dealt in 2016, you don't often get a second chance," McCreery said. "So I knew if we were going to bet my career on anything, the resurgence of my career, I am going to bet on 'Five More Minutes.'"

McCreery's rebound play worked. He released "Five More Minutes" last year while still unsigned. The song became an emotional part of his live shows, earning standing ovations. He signed to independent Nashville label Thirty Tigers Records, which pushed it to the top of Billboard's country airplay chart this month, just in time for "Seasons Change," coming out on Friday.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Nicolas Cage, Halsey lending voices to 'Teen Titans GO!'

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Oscar-winner Nicolas Cage, singer Halsey and rapper Lil Yachty will add their voices to "Teen Titans GO! to the Movies." USA Today reports Cage will be the voice of Superman, Halsey co-stars as Wonder Woman, and Yachty plays Green Lantern in the animated movie of the Cartoon Network show due in theaters in July. Executive producer Sam Register says. "Every superhero in the DC Universe has an impact on the fans, so we felt a great responsibility to find a voice for each character that would not only suit the role, but the playful tone of the Titans." Cage is a major Superman fan. The actor named his son Kal-El, which was Superman's Kryptonian birth name. He also once sold an issue of Superman's 1938 debut comic for $2.1 million.

Daughter of Steve Jobs is working on a memoir

NEW YORK (AP)—Lisa Brennan-Jobs, daughter of the late Steve Jobs, has a book deal. Grove Press announced Wednesday that Brennan-Jobs is working on a coming-of-age memoir, "Small Fry." The book is scheduled for Sept. 4. Brennan-Jobs, 39, has been in the news much of her life. Steve Jobs was estranged from her mother, Chrisann Brennan, and initially denied that Lisa was his daughter. Brennan-Jobs was written about in Walter Isaacson's best-selling Steve Jobs biography and has been depicted in films such as "Steve Jobs," written by Aaron Sorkin. Grove Press is calling book the "poignant" story of growing up in different worlds and contending with a famous and unpredictable father.

Jamaican act Flourgon sues Miley Cyrus over 'We Can't Stop'

NEW YORK (AP)—Jamaican artist Flourgon has sued Miley Cyrus and Sony Music for the singer's 2013 song, "We Can't Stop." The lawsuit, filed Tuesday in New York City, claims Cyrus' megahit borrows from Flourgon's 1988 song, "We Run Things." On her song, Cyrus sings: "We run things, things don't run we." Flourgon's song includes virtually the same line, "We run things, things no run we." Flourgon's real name is Michael May. The lawsuit, which seeks $300 million in damages, also names RCA Records, which is a Sony label, and Mike WiLL Made-It, who produced and co-wrote "We Can't Stop." Cyrus' song became an international multiplatinum hit, giving her an official pop star breakthrough. The song reached No. 2 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart. A representative for the defendants didn't immediately return an email seeking comment.

Rapper Juelz Santana pleads not guilty to weapons charges

NEWARK, N.J. (AP)—Rapper Juelz Santana has pleaded not guilty to drug and gun charges stemming from an incident at Newark Liberty International Airport last week. Santana entered his plea in Newark on Wednesday to two state weapons charges and a drug possession charge. His next court hearing is scheduled for April 9. Authorities say security personnel found a loaded .38-caliber handgun and oxycodone pills he didn't have a prescription for in a carry-on bag containing his identification last Friday. They say he had fled the area, leaving two bags behind. He turned himself in on Monday. Santana also faces federal charges stemming from the same incident and is being jailed while the case proceeds. The 36-year-old New York City-born rapper lives in Totowa, New Jersey. His real name is LaRon James.

Cancer diagnosis prompts search for life's lost love

DEAR ABBY: This is the 37th anniversary of when I met and fell in love with a beautiful young woman in Iowa. We were together less than a year before she decided to pursue her dreams in California. When she left, it broke my heart for years. To this day I still feel the loss.

In the years that followed, our paths crossed a few more times. Because I was recently married then, I told my old friend and lover I needed to close the book on our relationship. Saying it ripped my heart out because I knew it would cause me to lose her forever, but we both respected it. After a divorce many years later, I started looking for her, to no avail.

An urgency has overcome me now because I have been diagnosed with cancer and I'm not sure what my future holds. I don't want to rekindle something I can't finish, but I would like to say goodbye one last time before I'm laid to my eternal rest. Should I continue searching for her or should I stop, hoping she hears my prayers after all these years and knowing I tried to do the right thing by her when I smiled and waved as she drove away so long ago?

UNSURE OF MY FUTURE

DEAR UNSURE: Please accept my sympathy for your diagnosis. I'm sure most women would be touched to hear they were the love of someone's life, even if that love was unrequited.

Remember, that decision was made many years ago. What if you find her and she's married with children? Would it make you feel better or worse? These days, many cancers are treatable/curable. If you should find her and you are not terminal, will it give you closure or more heartache? Only you can answer that.

DEAR ABBY: My ex-wife and I have a 5-year-old son, "Ricky." Each year it's becoming more of a disagreement how to handle details for his birthday party. She believes that, in addition to inviting his closest friends, we need to invite every child in his school's class.

Ricky is in kindergarten and there are 18 children in his class. She says we can't risk hurting any potential uninvited classmates (and thereby their parents). My thinking is it's our son's special day and he should have only the people there he wants most.

There's also the party's expense. I don't believe we need to foot the bill for extra kids and supplies. Personally, I also don't want our son to be spoiled by receiving so many additional birthday presents.

Where do you sit on this issue? And if you agree with my wife, how old will our son be when this is no longer in effect?

KEEPING THE PEACE IN FLORIDA

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

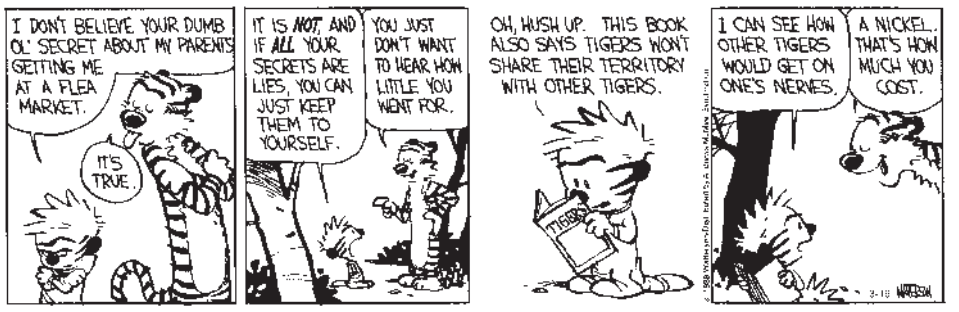
DEAR KEEPING THE PEACE: I do not agree with your wife. If your son would be inviting all but a few of his classmates, then I can see that there might be hurt feelings. But if the number of guests is limited to say, six, I don't think that would be the case. Fear of offending the parents of the uninvited two-thirds of his class should not enter into the decision. This would also ensure that your son is not snowed under by an avalanche of gifts.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

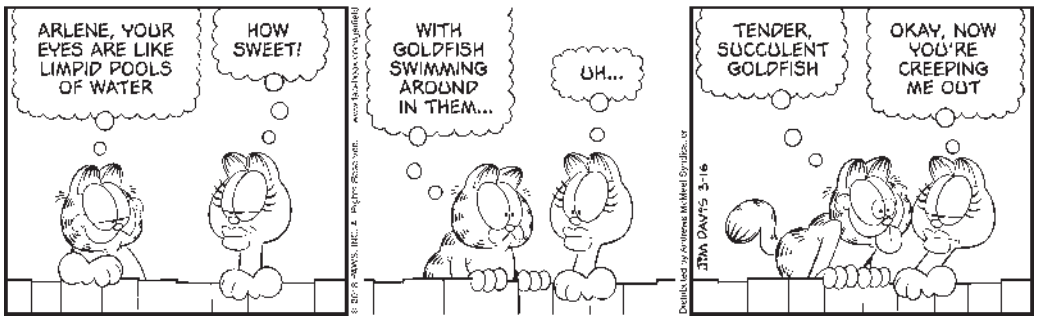
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


I DON'T BELIEVE YOUR DUMB OL' SECRET ABOUT MY PARENTS GETTING ME AT A FLEA MARKET.
IT'S TRUE.
IT IS NOT, AND IF ALL YOUR SECRETS ARE LIES, YOU CAN JUST KEEP THEM TO YOURSELF.
YOU JUST DON'T WANT TO HEAR HOW LITTLE YOU WENT FOR.
OH, HUSH UP. THIS BOOK ALSO SAYS TIGERS WON'T SHARE THEIR TERRITORY WITH OTHER TIGERS.
TIGERS
I CAN SEE HOW OTHER TIGERS WOULD GET ON ONE'S NERVES.
A NICKEL. THAT'S HOW MUCH YOU COST.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis


ARLENE, YOUR EYES ARE LIKE LIMPID POOLS OF WATER
HOW SWEET!
WITH GOLDFISH SWIMMING AROUND IN THEM...
UH...
TENDER, SUCCULENT GOLDFISH
OKAY, NOW YOU'RE CREEPING ME OUT
JIM DAVIS 3-16

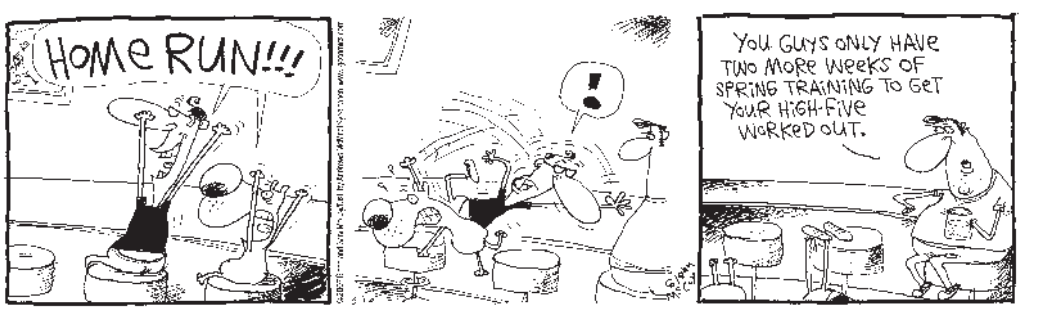
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

THE COUCH IS TALKING TO YOU?
SORT OF.
ADAM. YOU'RE A "NAP GUY." IT'S OKAY TO NAP.
I KNOW. I KNOW. IT'S IN MY BLOOD.
IT REALLY IS. YOU'RE "Z POSITIVE."
CURSE THESE DROWSY GENES OF MINE!

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

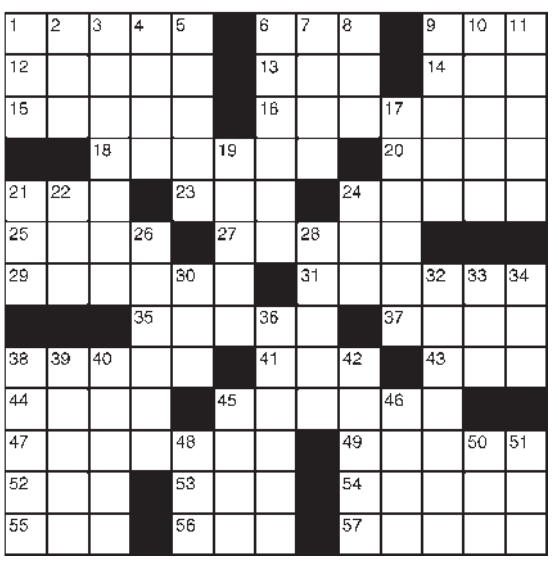
ACROSS
1 Wear
6 NASCAR advertiser
9 Priestly garment
12 Bottled spirit?
13 Pint-sized
14 — chi
15 Vestige
16 Just for fun
18 Bawdy
20 Desire
21 "Unh-unh"
23 "You bet!"
24 Watched surreptitiously
25 Yale students
27 Dijon darling
29 "I thought —!"
31 Inuit in a 1922 film
35 Wash-bowl
37 "Dedicated to the — Love"
38 Rough, like burlap
41 Gloomy guy
43 Toss in
44 Medicinal plant
45 Was right for
47 Out with one's sweetie
49 Beethoven's "Für — "
52 Wrestling surface
53 More (Sp.)
54 Put in office
55 Apr. check casher
56 Mil. stores
57 Trails

DOWN
1 Pvt.'s superior
2 Apiece
3 Impulsively
4 Costa —
5 Very small
6 Nike symbol
7 Nashville's st.
8 Green shade
9 Arcade pioneer
10 T-shirt size
11 Went cycling
17 Ida of "High Sierra"
19 Computer pros
21 Museum-funding org.
22 Gore and Green
24 Madrid Mrs.
26 Filled in
28 Boredom
30 Low isle
32 Fighting the battle of the bulge
33 British ref. work
34 Tease
36 "Reckon so"
38 Campbell or Judd
39 Of an arm bone
40 Tub toys
42 Precipitous
45 Classic R&B record label
46 Big name in scat
48 Sound booster
50 Learning ctr.
51 Roswell visitors

Solution time: 25 mins.

F	L	A	K		H	U	B		W	E	B	S
L	A	R	A		A	M	I		A	L	O	T
A	M	E	N		I	P	O		D	E	A	
W	E	A	S	E		S	A	V	O	R	Y	
			A	D	A		G	E	R			
M	E	A	N		C	O		O	R	A	D	O
I	N	D			A	W	E			D	U	D
A	D	O	R	A	B	L	E		H	C	E	D
			P	E	N		R	O	E			
A	S	T	U	T	E		I	R		S	E	S
G	L	I	B		A	C	E		S	T	U	N
E	A	V	E		R	A	S		E	R	I	
S	E	F	N		P	O	T		S	P	O	T

Yesterday's answer 3-16



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

Happy Birthday: Combine your skills and your desire to do things differently and you will come up with a plan that helps you get ahead. It's your turn to shine and to call in favors that have been outstanding for some time. Mix the old with the new and you will find common ground that is rich with ideas and prosperous possibilities. Your numbers are 1, 6, 17, 20, 27, 33, 42.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* You'll face resistance if you share your intentions or plans. Try to get the bulk of whatever you are working toward finished, and don't leave any room for criticism. Perfection will be required and the presentation needs to be flawless. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* You'll have some remarkable ideas, but before you move forward, make sure you are being realistic. Do your homework and pull in the people required to make your idea fly. Don't let the fear of failure stop you from moving forward. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Keep everyone guessing. The faster you move and the more adaptable you are, the less chance anyone will have to catch up to you. Keeping others guessing will give you an edge in the negotiation process. ✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* An interesting proposition will grab your attention. Test others by asking pertinent questions and making decisions based on the responses you receive. Show some determination and you will come out ahead. Attend a networking function or socialize with colleagues. ✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Arguing over money, settlements or health issues will only escalate matters to a point of no return. Be willing to listen, compromise and remain positive if you want to avoid gridlock and bring about favorable change. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* A change to the way you live will be stressful. Don't make a fuss or get into an argument. Remain steady for the people affected by the personal alterations taking place. Keep the peace and work diligently to adapt quickly. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Don't leave anything unfinished at work or it will be frowned upon. The more you do to help others or to bring about positive changes to your environment, the greater your popularity and chances to get ahead. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Don't let someone from your past disrupt your life. Remember why you didn't stay in touch and concentrate on the people in your life who have made your world a better place. Focus on the future and leave the past behind you. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* When it comes to dealing with friends, relatives or anyone who is using emotional tactics to sway you in a certain direction, think twice before you engage in something that isn't what it appears to be. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Mix the old with the new. An idea or dream you once had can now be brought back to life. Go about your plans privately until you have everything in place and you will avoid interference and unnecessary delays. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* You'll have to carefully decipher what is being said. Nothing will turn out to be quite what you expect. Bide your time and consider what's actually being offered before you respond or take part. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Being realistic is necessary, but so is trying your hand at something that excites you. Look at the pros and cons and stay within your budget, time frame and capabilities, and strive to reach your goals. Make every move count. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are fervent, convincing and charismatic. You are energetic and changeable.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	9			7			5	
3			1		6			7
				8				
	5						1	
4		7				6		9
	1						8	
				5				
6			2		8			4
	4			9			3	

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 3/16

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

5	6	3	8	4	2	7	1	9
8	7	9	1	5	3	6	4	2
4	1	2	6	9	7	3	5	8
6	9	8	4	2	5	1	3	7
3	4	5	7	8	1	2	9	6
1	2	7	3	6	9	4	8	5
2	3	1	5	7	8	9	6	4
7	8	6	9	3	4	5	2	1
9	5	4	2	1	6	8	7	3

Difficulty level ★★★ 3/15

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

NIKOLA TESLA **Solution: 7 letters**

G	A	F	K	V	O	F	R	E	Q	U	E	N	C	Y
E	E	C	U	R	R	E	N	T	S	Z	T	I	Y	R
I	X	N	I	N	A	S	E	V	A	W	T	H	T	O
S	G	P	E	R	D	M	L	R	A	E	P	U	E	M
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• 3-Liner	$15	$30
• 5-Liner	$24	$45

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Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

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Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

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ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Strategic Gaming Solutions, Inc. DBA: Club C

Cook – Part Time (1)

Requirement:
High school graduate, GED or equivalent plus two (2) year work experience as a cook. Preferable one with experience in Western, Japanese, Korean and Chinese cuisines. Must be energetic with an excellent track record in hospitality and who thrives in a fast pace service environment. Able to multi-task and flexible to work days, evenings, weekends and holidays. Final interview may include a skill test. This position requires examination and clearance for Food Handlers Certificate before hire. Food Handlers Certificate must be valid at all time during employment.

Salary Range - $9.00 - $10.00

Anticipated starting date of Employment: October 01, 2018
Anticipated closing date of employment: September 30, 2019
Interested applicants may pick up an application at our HR Office located within Kanoa Resort, Susupe Beach Road from Monday to Friday between the hour of 10:30AM to 5:30PM. Applications must be supported with resume, diploma or certificate and a valid photo I.D.
Applicant must be eligible to work in the U.S.

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Closing Date: March 20, 2018

(3) Barber
(4) All-around Beautician
(1) Business Operations Manager
(1) Sales/Accounting Clerk
(1) Air-con Technician

Interested applicants, please send resume to
MANTRADE COMPANY, INC.
P.O. Box 506118, SAIPAN, MP 96950

EMPLOYMENT

1 Building & Grounds Maintenance. $7.05-$7.25/hr. Mail resume to Pacific International Marianas, Inc. dba Midway Motors. P.O. Box 500887, Saipan MP 96950.

QCM, LLC.
Is seeking for the following:
(**6**) **Construction Workers**
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Must have own reliable transportation, no housing, no insurance. Minimum wage.

Send references, police clearance and resume to QCM, LLC. at PMB 3602 Box 10001, Saipan, MP 96950.

The Consular Office of Japan is seeking a Driver

1. Qualification Requirements
- US Citizen or individual that are permitted to work legally in US.
- Must be fluent in speaking and understanding English.
- Must have a valid CNMI Driver's License.
- Have no previous record of accident or violation of traffic law and no criminal background history.
- Must have a high confidence as being a professional driver.
- Must be flexible to work early in the morning, late in the evening and on holidays.

2. Working hours, day offs and leaves.
- Working hours are Monday through Friday, 08:30 a.m. to 17:00 p.m.
- Saturday, Sunday and Holidays will be day offs.
- You will receive paid vacation leaves.

3. Salary
- Salaries will be determined by the individuals experience and ability.
- Any duty outside of working hours will be given overtime payment.

4. Procedure on applying for the position
Those who wish to seek the Driver position for the Consular Office of Japan in Saipan, must submit the following documents directly to our office by 26th March 2018, Monday at 12:00 p.m. Please be noted that documents submitted to our office will not be returned.
1. Resume with the applicant photo.
2. Detailed explanation on the reason for applying for the position.
3. Copy of applicant passport or green-card.
4. Copy of the applicant valid driver's license.
5. Police Clearance

5. Selection Process
Screening of Documents, Interview, Driving Test

6. Scheduled employment date
12th April 2018, Thursday

7. Address and Contact Information
Address: Suite 201, MH I BLDG, Marina Heights Business Park, Puerto Rico,
Contact Information: 323-7201/7202

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Position: MARKETING MANAGER

Job Description: Identifies current and future customer requirements by establishing rapport with potential and actual customers and other persons in a positions to understand service requirements; Ensures Availability of merchandise and services by maintaining inventories; formulates pricing policies by reviewing merchandising activities; Determining additional needed sales promotion; authorizing clearance sales; studying trends; Markets merchandise by studying advertising, sales promotions, and display plans; analyzing operating and financial statements; Secures merchandise by implementing security systems and measures; Protects customers by providing a safe and clean environment; Maintains the stability and reputation of the store by complying with legal requirements; Determines marketing strategy changes by reviewing operating statements and departmental sales records; Maintains professional and technical knowledge by attending educational workshops; establishing personal networks; Maintains operations by initiating, coordinating, and following operational and personnel policies.

Minimum Qualifications: Must have a strong marketing sense to be able to perform the above duties.

Job Site: 101 Akari Building, Chalan Pale Arnold Road, Gualo Rai, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

How to Apply: Submit or mail professional resume to:
SPHERE, INC.
Office Address: 101 Akari Building, Chalan Pale Arnold Road, Gualo Rai, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.
Mailing Address: PMB 761, P.O. Box 10003, Saipan, MP 96950

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Position: EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN

Job Description: Do on the spot assessment of the patient's condition and determine a proper course of treatment; Use backboards and restraints to immobilize patients and secure them in the ambulance; Help transfer patients to hospitals and other healthcare facilities and report their observations and first aid treatment before relinquishing the care to the doctors or nurses-in-charge; Create a patient care report using EMS charts documenting the medical care given to the patient at the scene and enroute to the hospital.

Minimum Qualifications: Must be high school graduate; With at least 20years of relevant work experience; Must have passed the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technician (NREMT); Must have completed and passed the training of required number of hours from the state-approved program; Must have acquired Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Certification (BLS-CPR/AED); Must be a licensed Emergency Medical Technician (as approved by Health Care Professions Licensing Board (HCPLB) of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; Must have a clean criminal background; Must know how to drive and must possess a valid CNMI Driver's License at all times; Must be willing to work flexible hours, including, nights/weekends/holidays; Must be computer-literate (Microsoft Word/Excel) and with knowledge on how to use/operate QuickBooks software). Experience in medical billing and coding is a plus.

Job Site: Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Island

How to Apply: Submit or mail professional resume to:
MARIANAS GLOBAL VENTURES, LLC.
dba Priority Care Services
Office Address: Beach Road, Chalan Laulau, Saipan,
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 500170, Saipan, MP 96950-0170

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT ONE (1) ACCOUNTANT

DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES:
- Prepare, examine or analyze accounting records, financial statements or other financial reports to assess accuracy, completeness, and conformance to reporting and procedural standards.
- Develop, implement, modify and document record keeping and accounting systems, making use of current computer technology.
- Compute taxes owed, prepare tax returns, ensuring compliance with payment, reporting or other tax requirements.
- Inspect book of accounts and accounting systems for efficiency and use of accepted accounting procedures.
- Organized and maintain financial records.
- Assess financial operations and make best-practice recommendations to management.
- Develop, maintain and analyze budgets, preparing periodic reports that compare budgeted costs to actual costs.

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIREMENTS:
- Bachelor's degree in Finance or Accounting
- Two (2) years experience in Finance or Accounting
- Must have knowledge in QuickBooks Pro Accounting software and Microsoft Office programs

Interested individuals please send your resume with a list of references, photocopy of a valid photo identification card & updated police clearance to:

Thomas T. Chong
Transamerica (Saipan) Corporation
P.O. Box 501579, Saipan, MP 96950

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IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

HERMINIA M. FUSCO, JULIA B. MATSUMOTO, and LIM, JAE YEOL,	CIVIL ACTION NO.. 06-0080
Plaintiffs, v. ROMAN B. MATSUMOTO, Defendant.	ORDER AFTER HEARING

This matter came before the Court for a hearing on Order in Aid of Judgment on February 21, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. in Courtroom 202A. Plaintiff Herminia M. Fusco appeared with her counsel, Colin M. Thompson. Defendant Roman B. Matsumoto did not appear. Based on the information presented at hearing, the Court orders the following:

1. That the Plaintiff's request for an order to serve Defendant by publication is granted;

2. That the Defendant, Roman Matsumoto is ordered to appear at the next hearing scheduled for April 4, 2018 at 9:00 a.m.; and

3. That the Defendant is ordered to appear on April 4, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. and Show Cause why he should not be sanctioned for violation of the Court's previous orders as well as answer questions in Aid of Judgement.

SO ORDERED this ___ day of March, 2018.

HON. ROBERTA C. NARAJA
Presiding Judge

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
P.O. Box 5153 CHRB, SAIPAN, MP 96950-5153
TEL. NOS. (670) 234-6925/6958/8036
FAX NO. (670) 234-1013

EXAMINATION ANNOUNCEMENT NO: 18-034
OPENING DATE: 02/16/18
CLOSING DATE: 02/16/19
(CONTINUOUS)

RE-ANNOUNCEMENT
This examination is for the purpose of developing an Open Competitive and Promotional Eligible list. It is the policy of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands that the personnel system will be applied and administered according to the principle of equal opportunity for all citizens and nationals as defined by the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Constitution regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin.

POSITION AND SALARY: Appraiser — Ungraded $35,000.00-$40,000.00 P/A

The salary given will be determined by the qualification of the appointee.

LOCATION: Department of Public Lands, SAIPAN

DUTIES:
Prepares appraisal reports for public and private land as requested. Develops appraisal review by following and complying with the binding requirements of Standards Rule 3-1 of the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP). Develops real property appraisal by following and complying with the binding requirements of Standards Rule 1-1 to 1-5 of the USPAP. Reports the results of an appraisal review by following and complying with the binding requirements of Standards Rule 3-2 and 3-3 of the USPAP. Performs in-house appraisal assignments and valuation services. Serves as a technical advisor and consultant on general real estate appraisal matters. Assists with drafting of implementing rules and regulations relating to real estate appraisal services pursuant to provisions of the statues. Conducts research and compilation of real estate and real property (land) markets for Saipan, Tinian and Rota. Provides and assists with informal training on real estate appraisal education to DPL staffs. Provides periodic reports of accomplishments on real estate appraisal assignments. Attends meetings, public hearings and other meetings as required. Attends court hearings as an expert witness to testify on land valuation matters. Travels inter-islands or other places to undertake all tasks relevant to real estate appraisal services as directed. Performs other related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:
Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's Degree in Real Estate, Business, Finance or related field plus four (4) years of work experience in appraisal or related work. Copy of Degree of Official Transcript and Police Clearance must be attached to the application.

CONDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS: This position is **"EXEMPT"**; Is not eligible to receive payment for overtime hours performed pursuant to Part IV.B16 of the Personnel Service System Rules and Regulation (PSSR/R), Part 1.7C of the Excepted Service Regulations (ESR) and the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Note: Education and training claimed under item 24(A) through (H) of the Application for Employment must be substantiated by an official school transcript, diploma or certificate. FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTS WILL RESULT IN AUTOMATIC DISQUALIFICATION.

INTERESTED PERSONS SHOULD SEND THEIR CURRENT APPLICATION FORMS TO:

Office of Personnel Management Springs Plaza, Gualo Rai Saipan, MP 96950	Office of Personnel Management Songsong Village Rota, MP 96951	Office of Personnel Management San Jose Village Tinian, MP 96952

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Position: LEGAL ASSISTANT

Job Description: Welcomes guests and clients by greeting them in person or on the telephone; answering or directing inquiries; Produces information by transcribing, formatting, inputting, editing, retrieving, copying, and transmitting test, data, and graphics; coordinating case preparation; Conserves attorneys time by reading, researching, reviewing, verifying, and routing correspondence, reports and legal documents; drafting letters and documents; collecting and analyzing information; initiating telecommunications; organizing client conferences, and attorney meetings; scheduling couriers, court reporters, expert witnesses, and other special functions; coordinating preparation of charts, graphs and other courtroom visuals; preparing expense reports; Maintains attorney calendar by planning and scheduling conferences, teleconferences, depositions, and travel; recording and monitoring evidence-gathering; anticipating changes in litigation or transaction preparation requirements; Represents attorney by communicating and obtaining information; following-up on delegated assignments; knowing when to act and when to refer matters to attorney; Generates revenues by documenting and inputting attorney billable time and reimbursable expenses; preparing invoices; tracking payments; Maintains client confidence by keeping client/attorney information confidential; Provides historical reference by developing and utilizing filing and retrieval systems; recording meeting discussions; maintaining transcripts; documenting and maintaining evidence; Maintains office supplies by checking stocks; placing and expediting orders; evaluating new products; ensures operation of equipment by completing preventive maintenance requirements; calling for repairs; Updates job knowledge by participating in educational opportunities; reading professional publications; maintaining personal networks; participating in professional organizations.

Minimum Qualifications: Must have at least 2-years of relevant work experience in a law office environment; With extensive knowledge of handling front office activities; Professional and with excellent organizational skills; Excellent written and oral communication and interpersonal skills; Knowledge of computer applications like Microsoft Word, Excel and Peachtree, QuickBooks, Adobe Acrobat, Microsoft Outlook, proficient in the use of legal research software such as Westlaw.

Job Site: 2nd Floor, D' Torres Building, Chalan Pale Arnold Road, Garapan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Island.

How to Apply: Submit or mail professional resume to:
KING LAW OFFICE
Office Address: 2nd Floor, D' Torres Building, Chalan Pale Arnold Road, Garapan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.
Mailing Address: PMB 197, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, MP 96950

JAE HOON CORPORATON D.B.A. PACIFIC GROCERS has openings for:

One (1) General Manager
Minimum Qualifications: Three years of experience as a General Manager for wholesale company with a minimum of 2,500 sales items and ability to read, write and speak Korean sufficiently to negotiate contracts and communicate with Korean speaking customers.
Duties: Manages and directs the company's overall wholesale food operations in Saipan as well as with Korean suppliers. Works in conjunction with company's corporate officers in planning, formulating, and establishing long-term and short-term objectives and goals as well as its marketing and operational policies and procedures. Manages and oversees the day-to-day sales, business, and administrative functions of the company. Manages and directs the company's marketing and sales activities, including implementation of the company's sales policies and marketing strategies; monitors overall sales activities and conformance with sales parameters; and oversees contractual arrangements and import/export financing requirements. Establishes and maintains customer relationships with existing clients and negotiates sales contracts with major customers. Directs and oversees expansion into new product lines and market areas. Exercises discretionary authority over the company's operations and personnel.

One (1) Operations Manager
Minimum Qualifications: Three years of experience as an Operations Manager for wholesale company with a minimum of 2,500 sales items.
Duties: Assists General Manager in managing and directing the company's operations in order to assure operational efficiency and identifies and resolves operational deficiencies. Manages the stock and inventory requirements based on sales orders, inventory, projected volume of sales, and current condition of economy. Supervises the purchase and procurement of merchandise, including import requirements with freight companies and government agencies. Manages assembly and storing of products by workers, filling of orders, and distribution to customers according to sales orders. Ensures compliance with established security, sales, and recordkeeping procedures and implements operational procedures of the company. Assumes the responsibilities of the General Manager in his absence.

One (1) Bookkeeper
Minimum Qualifications: Three years of experience as a bookkeeper or accountant for wholesale company with a minimum of 2,500 sales items and working knowledge of QuickBooks and SellWise softwares.
Duties: Records company's wholesale business transactions and retains all accounting records. Posts, verifies, and reconciles accounts payable, accounts receivable, expenses, payroll, and other ledger accounts. Prepares preliminary financial reports by collecting, analyzing, and summarizing account information. Prepares payroll and payroll taxes and distributions to government. Prepares gross receipts tax returns. Documents business transactions and verifies purchase orders and other financial transactions in order to substantiate the transactions prior to settlement. Prepares cash reconciliation, balances check books, and makes bank deposits.

One (1) Sales Representative
Minimum Qualifications: Two years of experience as a sales representative for wholesale company with a minimum of 2,500 sales items.
Duties: Sells company's products to retail stores. Meets with customers in order to explain and promote the quality and competitive costing of the company's products. Displays and/or demonstrates products and suggests products that meet customers' needs. Quotes prices and credit terms for purchase of company's products. Prepares sales slips or sales contracts. May sign purchase orders, and collect payment from customers.

If interested, send resume to Jae Hoon Corporation d.b.a Pacific Grocers by email to wonshan@pacificgrocers.com or by fax at 670-288-1239. Proof of qualifications required.

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MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN

The position is responsible for the installation, maintenance, and repair of electrical wiring, equipment, and fixtures. Candidates should have knowledge in the maintenance field, possess excellent communication and organizational skills, and the ability to work flexible hours. Interested applicants must have a high school diploma/ GED or its equivalents; Completion of a craft apprenticeship or an equivalent number of years of education and production maintenance experience is preferred not required; Two or more years of strong hydraulic, pneumatic, mechanical, industrial, and electrical skills with some HVAC experience is a plus.

ACCOUNTING ASSISTANT

This position is responsible for computing, classifying, and recording numerical data to keep financial records complete. Interested and qualified candidates should be highly motivated with strong communication and organizational skills and be proficient in MS Excel. Some practical work experience in finance is desired; Accounting background is preferred not required.

Interested individuals who meet the above requirements should submit their resume no later than Friday, March 23, 2018. Resumes may be submitted to the attention of IP&E Human Resources Department via:

Office: Corner Puetto St. and Industrial Drive Commercial Port Saipan, MP 96950
Email: HumanResourceTeam@ipehq.com
Mail to: PMB 1009 Box 10000, Saipan, MP 96950

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Vikings, Broncos talking Trevor Siemian trade

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)— While Kirk Cousins was on his way to visit, the Minnesota Vikings were moving swiftly toward securing a potential backup.

According to a person with knowledge of the negotiations, the Vikings were working on a trade Wednesday with the Denver Broncos to acquire quarterback Trevor Siemian. The person spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because the deal, first reported by NFL Media, was not final.

Cousins, meanwhile, arrived on a private plane with his wife and infant son before heading downtown for dinner with team officials with all signs pointing to a deal as the new league year began.

Siemian would give the Vikings a capable backup who started 24 games for the Broncos over the last two seasons, with the free agent Cousins the team's primary target. As the Vikings watched quarterbacks Case Keenum (Denver), Sam Bradford (Arizona) and Teddy Bridgewater (New York) all join other teams as the new league year began, they were running out of options on a market that began with an unusually high amount of accomplished quarterbacks but quickly dried up amid the opening flurry. The Jets not only brought in Bridgewater, they re-signed veteran Josh McCown, too.

The Broncos juggled between Siemian, Brock Osweiler and Paxton Lynch last season and split the position in 2016 between Siemian and Lynch. Siemian, who was drafted by Denver in 2015 in the seventh round out of Northwestern, has a 79.9 career passer rating with 30 touchdowns and 24 interceptions over the last two years.

AP

Denver Broncos quarterback Trevor Siemian looks to pass during the first half of an NFL football game against the Los Angeles Chargers Sunday, Oct. 22, 2017, in Carson, Calif.

He was never the favored candidate, but he climbed his way to the top of the depth chart after Peyton Manning's retirement and gave the rebuilding club some decent performances despite some struggles.

The Vikings also still have Kyle Sloter, a prospect they signed last September after he was cut in training camp by the Broncos. They even elevated him to the active roster last season to make sure they could keep him, while Bradford was sidelined with a knee injury and Keenum was thriving as the unexpected starter.

Twin Cities television stations staked out the small airport where the Cousins family landed with Vikings general manager Rick Spielman and the restaurant for footage of Cousins, the 29-year-old who also pushed himself up the pecking order with Washington after being drafted in the fourth round in 2012 behind second overall pick Robert Griffin III. Cousins has topped 4,000 passing yards in each of the last three seasons and, despite not owning a single victory in the playoffs, became the most valuable player on this year's free agent market given his age, durability and accomplishments. ESPN reported Tuesday that Cousins will sign a fully guaranteed $84 million contract that spans three years, but his agent said no decision had been made yet.

If the deal gets done as expected and Cousins stays healthy through the preseason, he'll represent the sixth different quarterback start Minnesota's season opener in six years.

The Vikings also let versatile running back Jerick McKinnon leave Wednesday for San Francisco and backup cornerback Tramaine Brock sign with Denver. Nine more of their players became unrestricted free agents, with kicker Kai Forbath, cornerback Terence Newman and punt returner Marcus Sherels atop the list of players likely to return. Guard Joe Berger has not yet decided whether to continue his career for a 14th season or retire.

Promises turn into paydays as NFL business year begins

All those promises worth millions upon millions to free agents turned into paydays Wednesday when the NFL's business year began.

Of course, teams needed to clear salary cap space or rejigger their ledgers to make it work, and they'll still be doing so for months.

While the likes of Drew Brees, Malcolm Butler and Andrew Norwell cashed in bigtime, having reached agreements in the past two days before everything became official, some value entered the marketplace.

Arizona released safety Tyrann Mathieu when it couldn't rework his deal. On Tuesday, the Cardinals let running back Adrian Peterson go.

Baltimore cut receiver Jeremy Maclin. Detroit said goodbye to tight end Eric Ebron. Pittsburgh tore up a secondary that often was torn up by opposing quarterbacks, releasing Mike Mitchell, Robert Golden and William Gay.

But Carolina had more success with a veteran, completing a one-year deal with defensive end Julius Peppers.

The 38-year-old Peppers, who contemplated retirement after 17 pro seasons, remains with the Panthers for $5 million, with $2.5 million guaranteed, a person familiar with the situation said. The person spoke to The Associated Press on Wednesday on condition of anonymity because the team does not release financial terms of contracts.

"I am fired up to have him back," Panthers coach Ron Rivera said. "It was amazing to have him as part of what we are trying to build and I think he can help us get to the next level."

Cleveland, meanwhile, did nothing more than listen to one of its greatest players, tackle Joe Thomas , announce his retirement. The Browns save his $10.3 million salary for 2018 and a $3 million bonus but lose their best player and leader in the expansion era (1999-present), a 10-time Pro Bowler.

"This was an extremely difficult decision, but the right one for me and my family," Thomas said. "Playing in the NFL has taken a toll on my body and I can no longer physically compete at the level I need to."

Messi reaches 100 CL goals, Barcelona beats Chelsea

BARCELONA, Spain (AP)—Lionel Messi joined Cristiano Ronaldo in the Champions League's 100-goal club after scoring twice to lead Barcelona past Chelsea and into the Champions League quarterfinals for an 11th straight season on Wednesday.

Messi also set up Ousmane Dembele in a 3-0 win at Camp Nou after he had scored Barcelona's goal in the opening-leg 1-1 draw in London.

Messi beat Thibaut Courtois with two strikes between the Chelsea goalkeeper's legs from very tight angles on the side of the box. He struck the opener three minutes into the match and took Barcelona's third goal in the 63rd.

Ronaldo, with 117 goals, is the only other player to reach the century-mark in Europe's elite club competition. Messi reached his 100th goal in 123 matches, while Real Madrid's star needed 144 games.

But the most dazzling moment from the Argentina forward, who returned from missing one match for the birth of his third son on Saturday, came when he helped Dembele score his first goal for Barcelona after he stole the ball from former Barcelona teammate Cesc Fabregas and darted past two would-be tacklers in the 20th.

While Chelsea coach Antonio Conte lamented his players' near misses— they hit the woodwork four times over the two legs—he lavished praise on Messi, whom he congratulated on the pitch following the final whistle.

"I think when you have the opportunity to make a great compliment to Messi, it is right to recognize a super, super, super top player," Conte said. "We are talking about an extraordinary player. The best in the world. This type of player is born once in 50 years."

Barcelona remained unbeaten in 25 straight Champions League matches at Camp Nou, a run that dates back to 2013. The hosts also stayed in contention for a rare treble of titles. They lead the Spanish league and have reached the final of the Copa del Rey.

Chelsea will now have to focus on finishing in the top four in the Premier League to return to tournament. It is currently in fifth place.

Also on Wednesday, Bayern Munich won 3-1 at Besiktas to advance 8-1 on aggregate.

Conte looked to repeat the team's relative success at frustrating Barcelona's attack from the first leg with its back line of five defenders.

But Messi needed very little to poke a hole in Chelsea's wall.

Barcelona's all-time leading scorer started an attack with a pass meant for Dembele that was twice deflected before Luis Suarez deftly flicked it back to Messi.

The Argentine forward targeted the only gap available: the slot in-between the legs of Courtois.

"We know that we can always count on him," Barcelona coach Ernesto Valverde said. "It goes with his character and the responsibility he feels for the team."

That ability to know exactly what his teammates need was clear when Messi swooped in to steal the ball from Fabregas in midfield and charged toward the box. Instead of passing to Suarez, he let the striker draw the remaining defenders to him, and then passed across for the unmarked Dembele to drive a rising shot over Courtois.

It was Dembele's first goal for Barcelona in his 12th appearance for the club and could represent a breakthrough for the 20-year-old France winger, who had been hesitant and error-prone in his previous games after recovering from two injuries since his move from Borussia Dortmund that could reach 147 million euros (about $173 million).

Despite getting nothing from striker Olivier Giroud, Chelsea continued to press for a goal and came closest near the end of the first half.

Willian and Eden Hazard both drew saves from goalie Marc-Andre ter Stegen and defender Samuel Umtiti before Marcos Alonso then sent a free kick off the post in injury time.

Durant leads undermanned Warriors past Lakers

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—Steve Kerr has long known he has an All-Star cast. Golden State's backups gave him another glimpse Wednesday night.

When three of the Warriors' four headliners were down injured, the role players rallied together.

Kevin Durant scored 26 points and the injury-plagued Warriors pulled away in the fourth quarter to beat the Los Angeles Lakers 117-106 while missing Stephen Curry on his 30th birthday and their two other All-Stars.

"That's been making Golden State so great these last couple years," guard Quinn Cook, who scored 13 starting in Curry's place, said of the Warriors coming together. "... Guys have to stay ready for situations like this. With three All-Stars out we still want to win a game. We're not coming in here just to compete."

Zaza Pachulia returned to the starting lineup for the first time since the All-Star break and had 10 points, 12 rebounds and five assists for the banged-up defending champions, who already had clinched a sixth straight playoff berth this week without playing.

Kerr's non-traditional, late-season starting lineup of Durant, Cook, Nick Young, Kevon Looney and Pachulia worked as the Warriors won their eighth straight home game. Young scored 18 points and had three of the Warriors' six 3s.

"These games are fun when guys who don't ordinarily get to play much, when they get a chance and really contribute," Kerr said. "It strengthens the team."

Durant, who had averaged 38.7 points over his previous three games, shot 10 for 19 but missed six of his seven 3-point tries. He added six assists and five rebounds. Looney matched his career high with 11 points for Golden State, which had lost a rare two in a row.

Julius Randle had 22 points and 10 rebounds before fouling out late as the Lakers were without starting forward Kyle Kuzma because of a sprained right ankle. Los Angeles had won two straight and three of four. Isaiah Thomas added 20 points with five 3-poitners and seven assists, while Lonzo Ball dished out 11 assists.

Curry sat for a third straight game after re-injuring his troublesome right ankle early in a March 8 win over the Spurs. He and Splash Brother Klay Thompson are both out for at least a four-game stretch and scheduled to be re-evaluated next week. Thompson has a fractured right thumb that will sideline him until March 22.

Wizards 125, Celtics 124, 2OT

In Boston, Bradley Beal scored 34 points, including a three-point play with 1:25 left in the second overtime, and Washington beat short-handed Boston.

Jayson Tatum missed a 3-pointer just before the buzzer that could have won it for the Celtics, who were without six players and missed several opportunities to put away the Wizards.

Otto Porter Jr. finished with 18 points and 11 rebounds. Markieff Morris scored 20 points, Ian Mahinmi added 14 and Tomas Satoransky had 10 points for Washington, which played the night before but still had enough energy at the end to rally past the weary Celtics, who blew a 20-point lead.

Boston patched together a lineup without All-Star point guard Kyrie Irving (knee) and center Al Horford (illness), two of the four regulars who were sidelined.

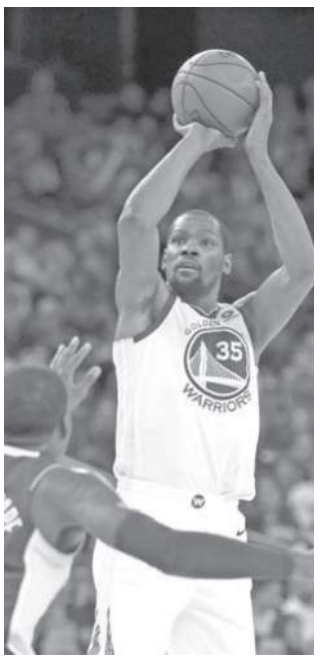
Magic 126, Bucks 117

In Orlando, Jonathon Simmons scored a career-high 35 points, D.J. Augustin added 32 and Orlando bounced back from an embarrassing defeat to beat Milwaukee.

Simmons was 7 of 12 from 3-point range and Augustin hit 6 of 9, three of them in the fourth quarter to help Orlando pull away.

Nikola Vucevic had 22 points, nine rebounds and nine assists for the Magic, who were routed 108-72 Tuesday night in San Antonio, their fifth straight loss.

Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 38 points for Milwaukee, which has lost seven of 10.



AP

Golden State Warriors' Kevin Durant shoots over Los Angeles Lakers' Kentavious Caldwell-Pope during the second half of an NBA basketball game Wednesday, March 14, 2018, in Oakland, Calif.

Kings 123, Heat 119, OT

In Sacramento, De'Aaron Fox made a layup at the buzzer to force overtime, Zach Randolph scored the first three points of the extra period and finished with 22, and Sacramento recovered after blowing a 16-point lead in the fourth quarter to beat Miami.

Randolph added a key block on Justise Winslow with 1:19 remaining in OT as Sacramento swept Miami for the first time since 2001-02.

That overshadowed an impressive night by Miami's Goran Dragic, who scored 11 straight points in the fourth quarter to fuel the Heat's comeback and matched his season high of 33 points. But Dragic missed a tying turnaround jumper with 20 seconds left in overtime, then stepped out of bounds with the ball with 12.3 remaining.

Randolph had the first three points in overtime with a free throw and 17-foot jumper. Fox made a short runner, Bogdan Bogdanovic hit a 28-foot 3-pointer and Buddy Hield added four free throws.

MP

From Page 39

after shutting down Pacific Islands Club.

Louis Hoin Ryu starred in Shirley's win after firing a hat trick, which he made in succession. He scored in the seventh, eighth, and 27th minute, while Jun Liu recorded the other goal for Shirley's.

KFAS 5, Matansa 0

In the last game in the division, Korean Football Association blanked Matansa for its third win in as many games and the lead in the six-squad group.

Banseok Kim and Hwapyoung Kim registered two goals apiece for KFAS, while Edwin Kim made one for the unbeaten team.

IT&E

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gained cushion in the third to pull off the 5-point win.

Jun Tabora made 9 of his 13 points in the third canto, turning a 30-32 halftime deficit to a 54-42 advantage, going into the fourth quarter. Jerry Tolentino then picked up where Tabora left off in the final frame, firing 10 of his 17 markers in that period to foil Geotesting's comeback bid.

Wednesday

IT&E 73 — E. Peredo 35, Devero 8, Palacios 7, Berline 7, Mateo 5, Jose 3, Paminutan 2, R. Peredo 2, Aglipay 2.

Saipan Vegas 67 — Guiab 18, Galarse 15, Fernando 14, Sanguyo 12, Claveria 2, Odicta 2, Mungcal 2, Almario 2.

Scoring by quarters: 15-16, 29-32, 50-45, 73-67.

Sunday First Game

Civic Center 72 — Alipio 20, Tolentino 17, Tabora 13, Tobias 11, Garcia 8, Cosino 2, Perez 2.

RNV 63 — R. Rueda 26, A. Mortos 23, Corong 8, Jumaquio 4, Tortor 2.

Scoring by quarters: 20-21, 30-32, 54-42, 72-63.

Second Game

Camor 70 — Fidelino 16, Kwon 16, Factor 12, Salalila 8, Lansang 8, Gaviola 4, Rebusquillo 4, Camacho 2.

Geotesting 53 — Alegre 17, Sablan 11, Abejo 8, Darag 67, N. Solis 6, A. Solis 3, Salazar 3.

Scoring by quarters: 10-14, 19-27, 44-41, 70-53.

TAGAMAN

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ed in 1988, will begin with a 1.5-kilometer swim from Kanoa Resort to Kilili Beach then transition to the 40K bike from Minatchom Atdao to Banzai Cliff and back before ending with the 10K run all the way to the Chamolinian Utt and back to Minatchom.

Interested participants have until tomorrow to register. All participants who will complete the Tagaman course will receive a finisher's medal, while the top overall and age group winners will also get medals and other prizes.

Meanwhile, before the Tagaman, it will be the youngsters' turn to put on a show in tomorrow's Taga Kids and Adult Sprint Triathlon that will start at 6am at the Paupau Beach.

The Taga Kids is the CNMI's age group and relay triathlon event for rising young triathletes 16 years old and below. The race is divided into the 5 to 8, 9 to 12, and 13 to 16 age groups.

The swim-bike-run course for U12 participants will be around the Paupau Beach to ensure the kids' safety. The 5- to 8-year olds will do a 50m swim and one loop each of the bike and run legs, while U12 participants must complete a 100m swim, and two loops in the bike and run.

The 13- to 16-year olds will have a 750m swim around Paupau and a 20K bike from the beach heading right toward Seafix, going to Banzai, and back to the starting line. The 5K run is from Paupau to Ayuyu Drive and back to the starting line.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Tagaman Triathlon race director Ricky Castro, Ronnie Santos, Triathlon Association of the CNMI vice president Florence Antonio, TRAC director Paul Plunkett, TRAC secretary Ronald Villafria, Kanoa Resort general manager Martin Jambor, Kanoa Resort operations manager Glenn Policare, TRAC director Manny Sitchon, and TRAC treasurer Rommel Buenaflor pose for a photo during last Wednesday's sponsorship presentation at the Kanoa Resort lobby.

Dorovskikh aims for Tagaman repeat

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Russia's Aleksandr Dorovskikh willbe aiming to repeat as champion as the 29th Tagaman Triathlon kicks off on March 24.

Dorovskih is already on the island and even ran the half marathon event in last week's 2018 Saipan Marathon in preparation for next weekend's competition. Dorovskikh completed last year's race in 2:12:01 or six minutes ahead of the Philippines' Joe Miller (2:18:17). Guam's Manami Iijima topped the women's division (2:12:52).

The Tagaman, which start-

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TSUNAMI

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Kouki Watanabe raced on the boys 9's 100m IM in Day 1 and clocked in at 1:32.07 to place No. 44 out of 91 swimmers. His sister Nanaka also did the 100m IM and her 1:18.35 was good for 27th place out of 43 participants. Maria Batallones and Asaka Litulumar also swam on Day 1 and submitted 35.27 second and 31.65 seconds in the 50m freestyle, respectively.

In the final day of the competition, Hans Xu had two events and recorded 33.54 seconds (No. 19 finish) in the 50m butterfly and 37.05 seconds (No. 28 place) in the 50m backstroke. In the 50m breaststroke, Tsunami Saipan had four entries in Kouki (46.80 seconds/No. 38), Batallones (44.83 seconds/No. 24), Nanaka (39.10 seconds/No. 34), and Asaka (39.12 seconds/No. 36).

"Every race was so close and exciting. I believe our swimmers had a job well done as they did their best in the tournament," Tsunami Saipan coach Hiro Kimura.

Kimura would like to thank the following for making the club's trip to Japan possible: Hyatt Regency Saipan, PIC Saipan, Pacific Wine & Spirits, Tasi Tours. Inc, Kingfisher Golf Links, Yano Enterprises. Inc., Mariana Resort & Spa, Java Joe's, C&R Corp., Summer Holiday Hotel, Thompson Law Office, Fishing Tackle Sporting Goods, Majestic Restaurant, YCO Corp., and CNMI Books. Tsunami Saipan would also like to acknowledge Japan Swimming Federation, Tokyo Swimming Association, Water Mates Swimming Club, former Japan national team coach Susumu Oomura and masters world record holder Kousuke Maeda.

CNMI

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ity based on its initial agreement with the Northern Marianas Sports Association. The NMA and NMSA will be signing a memorandum of understanding this week to make the former's designation official.

NMI

From Page 40

three of them registering double figures and three more adding at least 8 points apiece for the squad's balance offense. N-Nes Siech led the Ol'Aces with his 16 points, while E.J. Abejo and Coby Santos contributed 14 and 13, respectively. John Ichihara chipped in 9 markers, while Frank Bomdoc and Dean Blake had 8 apiece.

The Ol'Aces opened a 24-7 advantage at the end of the first quarter and continued to pad their lead in the last three en route to the 64-point winning margin.

The CT Law Rollers Bulls never had a chance against the prolific offense, as only three players made it to the board for the losing squad. Jeremy Agulto tallied 12 points for the CT Law Rollers Bulls, J.P. Cruz recorded 11, and Devon Pangelinan posted 3.

The CT Law Rollers Bulls scored in single digit in each of the first three quarters before logging 13 points in the final canto when the Ol'Aces played letdown on defense, as the former had the game already in the bag.

In the second game, the CT Law NMI Rollers got off to a good start and hung tough in the homestretch to beat the 670 Sonics XVIII.

The CT Law NMI Rollers established a 23-12 lead at the break behind the 12 points of Sunjoon Tenorio and protected the driver's seat in the second half.

Aaron Ogumoro took over from Tenorio in the second half, as the former dropped 8 of his 10 points in that period. Ogumoro delivered 4 of the CT Law NMI Rollers's last 7 points with his pair of free throws sealing the deal for their squad.

First Game

CT Law NMI Rollers 42—Tenorio 16, Ogumoro 10, Hudkins 6, Factor 4, Johnny 3, Cruz 2, Quitugua 1.

670 Sonics XVIII 36 —Rafols 10, Alipio 7, Ordona 4, Cobacha 4, Itaas 3, Malasarte 2, Diaz 2, Apasan 2, Kapileo 1.

Second Game

Ol'Aces 90 — Siech 16, Abejo 14, Santos 13, Ichihara 9, Blake 8, Bondoc 8, Kabiroel 5, Ngirarois 4, Sacdalan 4.

NMI Rollers Bulls 26 — Agulto 12, Cruz 11, Pangelinan 3.

MP United stays on top of Division A

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
MP United Football Club players pose for a group photo before their game against Paire FC in Division A of the 2018 Spring M-League late last month at the Hopwood Middle School Field.

Sunjoon Tenorio delivered a hat trick in MP United's shutout win against Okadaya in the Division A game in the 2018 Spring M-League last Sunday at the Hopwood Middle School Field.

Tenorio started his string of goals in the 27th minute, while his last two came in the 70th and 76th minute to keep MP United at the No. 1 spot in the team standings as the squad improved to a 3-0-0 win-draw-loss record.

Okadaya has yet to win this season, as it had a draw and two losses to remain at the bottom half of the seven-team field. Completing the standings are Paire (2-0-1), idle TanHoldings (1-1-0), Teen Ayuyus (0-2-1), and Winners & Pacific Eco (0-1-1).

Paire moved up to the second spot after slipping past Winners and Pacific Eco, 5-4.

Chris Nelson scored the winning goal for Paire in the 85th minute. Jonathan Takano also helped Paire's cause with his shots in the 29th and 59th minute, while Patrick McCallion chipped in one in the 75th. Paire got an own goal in the eighth minute.

Winners and Pacific Eco drew a pair of goals from Joe Miller, while Ensik Choi and Jun Sik Kim contributed one apiece.

In other results, Kanoa FC forced a draw against the Teen Ayuyus.

The Teen Ayuyus committed an error in the 86th minute, allowing Kanoa to have an own goal and tie the game.

Earlier in the 50th minute, Joshua Waldo found his target to hand the Teen Ayuyus a shaky 1-0 lead.

DIVISION B
WNT 5, Sun Palace 4

The CNMI U16 Women's National Team broke into the win column after nosing out Sun Palace.

The WNT had an auspicious start, leading at 5-0 by halftime and withstood Sun Palace's comeback bid to keep the win.

Janelle Chognaki scored in the fourth and 14th minute, while Mikky Vargas hit the board in the 29th and 34th, and Sharmaine Francisco gave the WNT its third goal in the 19th minute for the squad's sizeable lead at halftime.

Brian Lubao also had a pair for Sun Palace, which got one apiece from Daniel Marl Pablo and Ariel Jinang.

Shirley's 4, PIC 0

Shirley's Football Club notched its first victory, too,

See MP on Page 37

Titanium keeps Indians winless

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Jobe Reyes tossed a complete game and Juan Tenorio drove in two runs in an 11-run scoring binge as Titanium cruised to a 17-2 win over the Indians in the 2018 Saipan Baseball League last Wednesday night at the Francisco M. Palacios Ballfield.

Reyes struck out eight and gave up only one earned run—a John Acosta RBI single that brought in Ian Lizama at the top of the fourth—in a no-relief job in six innings. The Titanium pitcher had three hits with no walks.

Rob Tudela, leading off for the Indians in the sixth, scored the other run on an error by Titanium catcher Jerald Cabrera.

Reyes, still in the sixth, fanned out Lizama, while Perry Cellis had a sacrifice bunt for a quick two outs before E.J. Tenorio had a single and moved to second on Titanium's third error in the game. The game then ended when Reyes forced Vince Sablan to ground out to third baseman Tindin Leon Guerrero, who fielded the ball cleanly to Joe Palacios at first base.

Juan Tenorio, meanwhile, highlighted Titanium's 11-run rampage at the bottom of the sixth to turn a 6-2 lead to an early win via 10-run rule.

Tenorio, with the bases loaded, had a two-RBI single to highlight Titanium's barrage of runs, bringing in Palacios and Bryan Iglecias, who walked and singled, respectively. Austin Benavente had a fielder's choice to load up the base.

The Bernard Cabrera-managed squad also capitalized on the Indians' nine errors in the sixth inning with Leon Guerrero, Isiah Lizama, and Brian Camacho reaching home plate and Jerald Cabrera scoring on an Aaron Benavente wild pitch. The Indians had a total of 17 errors as they committed eight in the first five innings—five in the fifth inning alone.

Titanium evened its record to 2-2 and is back on track after absorbing two straight losses against the Falcons (8-2 on March 8) and the C.K. Bears (17-11 on Feb. 27). Titanium opened its season with a 12-7 beating of the Mariners last Feb. 16.

The Indians, on the other hand, are winless in four games. The Indians' other losses were against the Bears (21-0) last Feb. 19, the defending champion Aces (9-2, Feb. 28), and the Blue Jays (18-8, March 5). They gave up an average of 16 runs per game.

IT&E outclasses Saipan Vegas

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Errol Peredo exploded for 35 points to power IT&E to a 73-67 victory over Saipan Vegas in 2018 Civic Center Inter-color Basketball League last Wednesday at the Civic Center court.

Peredo scored 12 of his total output in the fourth quarter to help IT&E overhaul a 5-point deficit and steal the win. He single-handedly towed IT&E back into the game, as he was the only player in his squad to score in twin digits.

IT&E was behind at the end of the third period, 45-50, when Peredo took over in the fourth and toyed around with the defense of Saipan Vegas to hand his team the close win. Peredo's fourth-quarter scoring surge made up for his two field goal performance in the third canto.

Saipan Vegas fell short in the fourth canto after having the lead majority of the first three, as its main gunner, Angelo Fernando, was held to 2 points in the final quarter. Before slowing down, Fernando tallied 10 points in the third frame. He finished with 14 points and was one of the four players that hit twin digits for Saipan Vegas.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
IT&E's James Dela Cruz, second left, and Saipan Vegas' Alvin Almario, left, battle for the rebound, while the former's teammates look on during the second quarter of their game in the Civic Center caging last Wednesday at the Civic Center court.

Junar Guiab led Saipan Vegas with his 18 markers, while Leo Galarse and Paulo Sanguyo chipped in 15 and 12, respectively.

Meanwhile, Civic Center and Camor won the pair of games last Sunday.

Civic Center downed RNV Construction,72-63, while Camor topped Geotesting, 70-53.

Jun Fidelino and Dixon Kwon drilled 16 points apiece to lead Camor's win, while Prince Factor also scored in double figures with his 12.

Camor led by only 3 after the third quarter, 44-41, but ended up with a 17-point winning margin as it went all out in the payoff canto. Geotesting lost, as it had no player hitting more than two field goals in the fourth-quarter letdown.

In the Civic Center-RNV Construction game, the former

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Vikings, Broncos talking Trevor Siemian trade

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Sports

Durant leads undermanned Warriors past Lakers

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Tsunami Saipan earns 4 medals

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Tsunami Swimming Center Saipan members pose for a photo during the opening of the Tokyo Junior Sprint 2018 held at the Tatsumi International Swimming Arena in Japan early this month.

Tsunami Swimming Center Saipan swimmers brought home four medals from the Tokyo Junior Sprint 2018 held at the Tatsumi International Swimming Arena in Japan early this month.

Isaiah Aleksenko delivered a gold medal and one bronze, while Aasish Dangol won a pair of bronze in the March 3 and 4 tournament that drew a record 3,258 participants.

Aleksenko competed in the boys 11's 50m freestyle and clocked in at 28.52 in the two-lap swim to notch the gold medal in the division. He was also the fastest swimmer among the 129 participants in the qualifying races after submitting 28.77 seconds.

In the 50m butterfly, Aleksenko checked in at 31.51 seconds to finish fourth overall and make it to the gold medal race. He went on to have another podium finish as he won the bronze after posting a better time (30.89 seconds) in the finals. Eighty-three swimmers joined the 50m butterfly.

Aasish swam in the 50m butterfly, too, in the boys 9 years old division and logged 34.61 seconds in the preliminary race. He placed third among 103 swimmers to qualify to the next round and earned his second bronze medal after swimming faster in the finals with his 34.38 seconds.

The 9-year-old Aasish earlier took a bronze medal in the 100m individuam medley after recording 1:18.93. In the qualifying races, the Tsunami Saipan swimmer posted 1:20.36 to rank second among 91 finishers.

Meanwhile, Aasish sister, Ashley also marched into the finals of her two events. She registered 1:15.15 in the girls 11's 100m IM qualifier and came in at sixth place out of 61 participants to move into the medal round. In the finals, Ashley broke her preliminary time after checking in at 1:14.24 and finishing fifth.

In the 50m butterfly, the older Dangol narrowly missed a medal after coming in at fourth place in the finals. She timed in at 31.11 seconds, eclipsing her mark (31.56 seconds) in the qualifier where she ended up at No. 6 out of 109 participants.

Besides the Dangol siblings and Aleksenko, five other Tsunami Saipan swimmers joined the two-day competition.

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'Give way to CNMI national team'

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Northern Marianas Athletics official Eli Rangamar reminded the community that the Oleai track is first a training facility for the CNMI national team.

That's why the NMA developmental officer is asking the public to give way to athletes and members of the national pool using the track and field facility, especially at this time when they are busy preparing for two regional competitions.

Rangamar made the appeal as the track is set to partially open to the public this Monday, March 19. Usage fees ($1 and $2 for kids and adults) will be imposed.

"The people need to understand that this is first a national training facility. It was built to support the CNMI national athletics program that's why if they see the athletes training, respect their space," Rangamar told *Saipan Tribune*.

JON PEREZ

The Oleai Sports Complex's track and field facility will open on Monday and Northern Marianas Athletics is asking the public to give way to the CNMI national team and training pool preparing for two regional tournaments this year.

He said that Lanes 1 to 6 are reserved for athletes training, while Nos. 7 and 8 are for joggers, walkers, and others who have their own physical activity. The track will be open from 8am to 7pm, while national athletes start their afternoon training at 4pm.

CNMI athletes are using the track in preparation for the 2018 Oceania Micronesian Regional Championships set from June 14 to 16 at the Oleai Sports Complex and the 9th Micronesian Games in Yap from July 15 to 27.

Rangamar also reminded the parents or those who will be bringing kids at the track to keep an eye on their children, especially when the national athletics team is training to avoid any accidents or injuries.

"They should keep their kids in check to avoid any injuries or accidents. You can't just stop in an instant if you already have momentum. A collision could happen if a kid crosses their path," Rangamar added.

Rangamar added that the field can't be used yet since they are still waiting for the grass to grow, while the chain link fence will be replaced using the money provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The NMA will be the caretaker of the track and field facil-

See CNMI on Page 38

NMI Rollers, Ol'Aces win in U18 games

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Ol'Aces and CT Law NMI Rollers prevailed in the pair of U18 division matches in the 2018 Frank M. Diaz Memorial Youth League last Wednesday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The NMI Rollers downed the 670 Sonics XVIII in the curtain-raiser, 42-36, while the Ol'Aces cruised past the CT Law Rollers Bulls in the second game, 90-26.

All the nine players that the Ol'Aces fielded in the lopsided game scored with

See NMI on Page 38

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The CT Law NMI Rollers' Chris Arceo tries to barrel his way into the defense of two 670 Sonics XVIII players during the first half of their boys U18 division game in the Diaz youth caging last Wednesday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.